

California Historical Quarterly

Summer 1972



COVER: Socialist farmhand turns the crank on a skeletal Ford truck at the Llano del Rio colony in 1915. The communal experiment in the Mojave Desert was less than a year old at the time this photograph was taken, but it had already produced a bumper crop of alfalfa. By the following year, the colony was growing ninety per cent of the food it consumed. Plagued by insufficient water supply and internal political frictions, the group migrated in 1918 to Louisiana. For a two-part account of the rise and fall of this remarkable social experiment, see pages 117 through 154. (Photograph from the collection of Paul Kagan.)

California Historical Quarterly

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J. Ross Browne: Wine Lobbyist and Frontier Opportunist

“YOUR FELLOW CITIZEN is here in the capacity of special agent of the wine growers of California,”¹ wrote J. Ross Browne to the readers of the *Alta California* in June, 1866. Withdrawing from the confusion and tension of Washington’s political circuit, the conscientious lobbyist paused to regroup his energies and to keep his followers posted on the latest developments regarding the new tax bill and how it might affect the state’s wine industry. Although this report was intended for only a small segment of the *Alta*’s audience, they undoubtedly read it with a good deal of interest. As early as the fall of 1865, there was a growing uneasiness among various California vintners over the possibility that they might have to pay additional taxes the following year. At that time most of the nation was still celebrating the end of the Civil War, but to legislators peace meant that there would be outstanding bills to be paid and so they were laying the groundwork for an extensively revised revenue code. Thus by the spring of 1866, as the likelihood of major tax increases grew even more evident, there were renewed efforts to revive the defunct California Wine Growers’ Association in hopes of alerting the industry to the impending danger and initiating a course of effective action that would allay this threat. The result of this concern provides a little known chapter in the life of J. Ross Browne—his unlikely involvement in the early development of California’s wine industry.

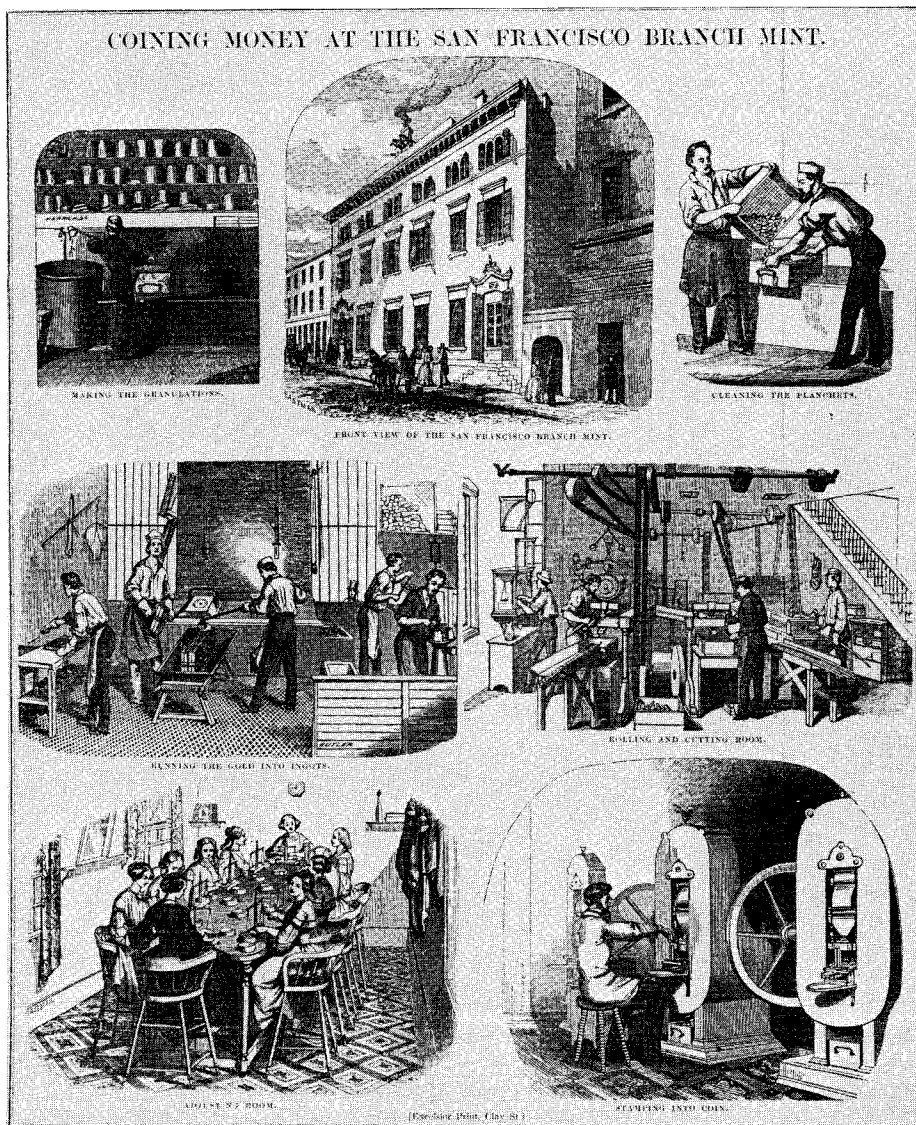
Perhaps the most interesting aspect of Browne’s trip to Washington was the fact that he ever made the trip in the first place, since he had been at odds with the most powerful member of the group he represented. Browne’s colorful career involved him in several phases of California’s expansion and development during the early years of its statehood. One of his most notable achievements was the reporting of all the proceedings at the 1849 convention in Monterey where the state’s constitution was drafted. During the 1850’s, he served as an ardent confidential agent for the U. S. Treasury Department and, on behalf of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, took a sympathetic interest in the plight of the Indians. Just before he left for Washington, he had become a serious student of mining affairs in the West. All this



Protagonists: J. Ross Browne and Colonel Agoston Haraszthy.

in addition to his popular accounts of his varied travels. Yet Browne's conscientious approach to whatever he did and his aversion to all situations that smacked of dishonest dealings inevitably brought him into conflict with various people he encountered along the way. One such person was Colonel Agoston Haraszthy, who subsequently became the largest vintner in Northern California and one of the chief spokesmen for the state's wine interests.

During the course of Browne's California activities for the Treasury Department from July, 1854 to February, 1860, one of the major sources of concern was the U. S. Branch Mint in San Francisco. By the mid-fifties in that city, efficiency and reliability were often as difficult to come by as a fortune in the Comstock country, and the Mint presents a convincing case in point. Throughout 1854, Browne's letters to James Guthrie, Secretary of the Treasury, complained that the Mint was almost incapable of maintaining a consistent schedule due to repeated shortages of the nitrate of soda used in the refining process. By the fall of 1855, these organizational concerns developed into pronounced suspicions regarding the ability and integrity of several officials, including Haraszthy, who supervised the melting and refining processes. Since Browne's misgivings about Haraszthy were more conjecture than proof, he withheld charges for a year and a half while he amassed evidence against the assayer. Finally, in June, 1857, the treasury agent announced his case. A study of past records revealed that the Mint had been suffering awesome gold losses for the past several years. Browne's careful investigation of the operation led him to the conclusion that Harasz-



Setting for chicanery? The U. S. Branch Mint in 1856.

thy had allowed \$130,000 worth of gold to escape up the flues.² As a result of these allegations, the assayer was temporarily forced to deed all his property over to the U. S. Government, in lieu of bond, pending the outcome of the legal proceedings.³

A closer analysis of this affair indicates that probably not all the missing gold went up the flue. In the first place, the property that Haraszthy consigned to the government was worth well in excess of the charged discrepancy—a handsome estate by any measure.⁴ How a man on government sal-

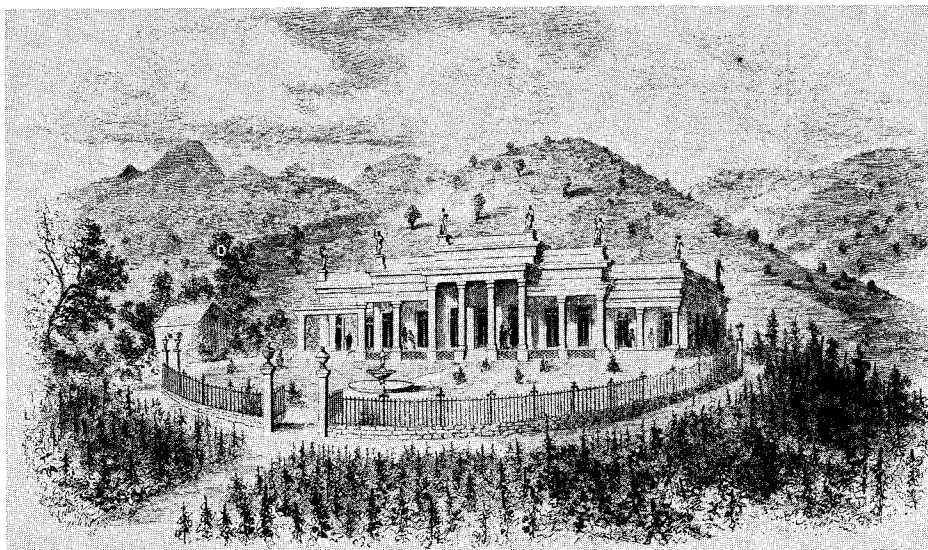
ary was able to amass such tremendous wealth distressed Browne well before he announced any formal charges. In October of 1856, he had confided to Guthrie:

He [Haraszthy] is a very efficient officer, but of late has been engaged a great deal in his private affairs. When he came here it was supposed that he was very poor. It is now generally believed that he is worth some thirty or forty thousand dollars, owns a large ranch, etc. From these and other reports which have reached me, as well as from his attempt to obtain the Mint sweeps, I consider him an unsafe man and would recommend his removal.⁵

Even more curious than Haraszthy's mysterious fortune is the little effect that these proceedings seemed to have had on the course of his life at the time—a vivid testimony to the intensity of his other involvements and the magnitude of his wealth. On April 24, 1857, Haraszthy resigned from the Mint, well in advance of Browne's formal charges which did not appear until June. Although he may very well have anticipated the forthcoming accusations, this was not necessarily the case. Early in 1857, he committed himself to an extensive project that would have forced him to resign from the Mint no matter what his situation there might have been. Having sold his ranch in San Mateo, Haraszthy had purchased a large block of land in Sonoma for the intended purpose of cultivating extensive vineyards. His previous life evidenced a longstanding interest in winemaking,⁶ and apparently his Sonoma acquisition represented the fulfillment of a life-long ambition. He obtained the land in February of that year and promptly proceeded to plant as many vines as possible so that by the end of the year he had more than 13,000 vines in the ground.⁷ He closed out the year by beginning construction on an elegant Grecian mansion. The only flaw in this energetic project was the fact that Browne was presently holding title to all his lands on behalf of the U. S. Government.⁸

The resolution of this dream was not to come until four years later. In November, 1859, the ex-assayer was formally indicted by a U. S. Grand Jury, but on March 2, 1861, he was acquitted. Although Haraszthy still emerged a wealthy and prominent vintner despite the public embarrassment of the proceedings and the inconvenience of his impounded property,⁹ one can safely imagine that the name J. Ross Browne evoked few charitable sentiments in him.

Five more years were to pass between the final settlement of this case and Browne's sudden appearance as a Washington lobbyist on behalf of the California wine producers, and they were five very important years for both the California wine interests and the busy Colonel. Winemaking grew from a customary practice to a legitimate industry between 1850 and 1860, but the fifties are best characterized as a period of necessary groundwork for the boom years of the sixties. In 1860, total production stood at a rather



Colonel Haraszthy left the U.S. Mint, planted thousands of grapevines and built a Grecian mansion on property impounded by the government.

modest 246,518 gallons;¹⁰ by 1866, the figure was 2,250,000¹¹—an eight hundred percent increase. All the vintners of any size were enthusiastically expanding their operations, though few could match the industrious programs of the Buena Vista enterprise.

As one might naturally expect, these breathtaking advances occasioned increasing concern among vintners for their vested interests, and the most active spokesman on their behalf was Agoston Haraszthy. The Colonel not only proved to be very knowledgeable on all aspects of viticulture,¹² but he also perceived the vital importance of good public relations to a successful commercial operation. During the late 1850's and on into the 1860's, he undertook almost singlehandedly the arduous task of cultivating interest in the wine industry. In spite of his dubious activities at the Mint, Haraszthy became an active member of the California Board of Agriculture¹³ and later served on the Vine Committee appointed by the state legislature in 1861. In this capacity, he wrote an informative and highly influential report concerning the state of grape and wine production in California. In addition, he spent five months of 1861 in Europe as a representative of the State of California making an extensive collection of quality vine cuttings with which he hoped to upgrade the quality of California wine.¹⁴ In 1862, the year he was to establish himself as the largest vintner in Northern California,¹⁵ he was instrumental in organizing and promoting the first meeting of the California Wine Growers' Association. Finally, he supplemented these activities by circulating abundant information to local newspapers and na-

tional magazines in order to keep the general public well informed on the development of California wines.¹⁶

Haraszthy's extensive influence on the state's wine industry, coupled with his previous dealings with Browne, cause one to wonder how Browne was ever chosen to represent the interests of the California winegrowers in Washington in 1866. Browne's life and writings do not indicate that he had any special connection with the wine industry nor that he was particularly fond of its product. How, then, did Browne acquire this curious job for which he was apparently ill-equipped and undesirable? Oddly enough, Browne's association with Indian affairs and a letter in the *Huntington Library* provide a revealing explanation.

When Browne returned to California in July, 1854, after a two-year absence, he was under salary to the U. S. Treasury Department as a confidential agent, a job which he later defined as the duty "to examine into every branch of public business connected with the collection of the revenue and the disbursement of the public moneys."¹⁷ The diversity of these responsibilities led him to investigate the case of Edward F. Beale, who had been forced to resign as Western Indian Superintendent amidst charges of embezzlement and mismanagement. David Goodman, Browne's principal biographer, suggests that the visit he made to the Tejon reservation in line with this affair during a trip to Southern California resulted from a Treasury Department directive. Yet the matter was more complicated and less coincidental than Goodman indicates.¹⁸ Browne, as the case turns out, was a friend of Beale, and there is convincing evidence that Browne had planned to investigate the charges against the ex-superintendent before he ever left San Francisco. On October 14, 1854, approximately the same time that Browne began his trip south, Beale wrote to B. D. Wilson:

This will introduce my friend Mr. J. Ross Brown[e], for whom I bespeak your cordial reception at Los Angeles.

I beg you will render him every assistance in your power, and endeavor to make his visit to your city agreeable. Mr. Brown[e] may require information on a variety of subjects and I have referred him to you as one whose position has placed it in his power to afford him all that he requires.¹⁹

Although this note is intended as an introduction for Browne, it also introduces to us a new character, who, strangely enough, provides the solution to the puzzling question of why Browne shows up twelve years later as a wine lobbyist. Since Wilson serves as such an important link in this study, perhaps it would be wise to sketch the background of this relatively unknown Californian.

Benjamin D. Wilson (1811-1878) is presented by John Walton Caughey as "an average Southern Californian" in his study of him in the *Huntington Library Quarterly*,²⁰ but his life seems hardly average by most modern

standards. Working as a fur trapper in New Mexico, Wilson was captured by Apaches during a dispute they had with a group of settlers. Some Indian friends enabled him to escape, though he reached safety in Santa Fe only after fleeing one hundred miles with virtually no food or clothing.²¹ Later he pushed on to California, where he again evaded death through the help of a friendly Indian who in this case treated him for a poisoned arrow wound.

These experiences provided Wilson with more than adequate qualifications to be Sub-agent for Indian Affairs in Southern California, a post he held under Edward Beale until his superintendent's dismissal.

Since Browne invested such a substantial amount of time and energy on the Beale case, it seems almost certain that he would have consulted Wilson. How these two men responded to each other we can only speculate, even though their similar backgrounds—their Southern childhood, their venturesome pasts, their acquaintance with pre-gold rush California, their interest in Indians—certainly provided them with sufficient material for a ready rapport. History's curious records seldom note mere acquaintances and often pass over important friendships. This was nearly the case with the relationship between Wilson and Browne, since, from the time of Beale's introduction until 1866, there is no evidence of any dealings between these two men. Yet when Browne writes to Wilson in April, 1866 (see Appendix), we find that Wilson's daughter Susan has been visiting Browne's family in Oakland for some time. As a further indication of the bond of trust that must have grown between these men over the intervening years, the letter reveals that Wilson had recently solicited Browne's help in the proposed sale of his \$250,000 estate. Still, the part that is most relevant to our concern involves Browne's remarks on his upcoming trip to Washington. His references to his trip as "our mission to Washington" and "our tax mission" indicate that they were the principal organizers and salesmen for this project. Although Browne is seeking tax benefits for all growers, he and Wilson are clearly bearing most of the financial burden. It seems strange that twelve years after the initial meeting between the Indian agent and the Treasury agent these two should be committed to a mutual concern for the California wine industry. However, the course of both men's lives during these years shows that Beale's introduction was the source of an abiding friendship between them that resulted in a convenient marriage of personal interests and produced some valuable benefits for the state's wine producers.

After a two-year tour of Europe during the early sixties, Browne returned to California and initiated some new professional ventures. From as early as his first trip to Virginia City in 1860, he had been attracted to mining enterprises, which he perceived to be an important industry of the growing West. This early curiosity soon developed into a pronounced



Pagoda Hill, the exuberant residence of J. Ross Browne in Oakland (ca. 1880), stood on 59th Street near Ross Road. The site is now paved over with Chabot Road.

interest while he was in Arizona, and he expanded an assignment for the Bureau of Indian Affairs into a series of trips to mining centers that ranged from California to Utah, from Idaho to Arizona. He knew that miners would pay well for competent sketches and descriptions of their operations, and he fully exploited this market. In turn, he reworked these materials into feature-length articles which he sold to various newspapers as he had his travel accounts. In fact, Browne's accounts proved sufficiently accomplished that they appeared in several numbers of *Harper's Monthly*.²²

Consequently, in 1866 Browne found himself in possession of a rather widespread literary reputation and a valuable knowledge of Western mining activities; and he was not one to overlook the potential value of these assets. When he first arrived in San Francisco on August 5, 1849, he found that his previously arranged job had fallen through, but within two months he had convinced California politicians that his experiences recording Congressional debates qualified him to report their Monterey convention, a job that he turned into a neat \$10,000 operation. This was the same man who in 1866 was convinced that a handsome government position might be obtained if only he could get to Washington to promote his case.

Like that of Browne, the life of B. D. Wilson had changed substantially between his 1853 involvement in Indian affairs and his dealings with

Browne in 1866. Prior to his association with Beale, Wilson had devoted most of his time to raising cattle and sheep, and through gradual land acquisitions he had built a sizable ranch that included most of the land now comprising the U.C.L.A. campus. The same year he met Browne he purchased a country estate from the widow of an Indian expert whom he had befriended through his work. In moving to Lake Vineyard, as he called it, he disposed of his Los Angeles ranch and devoted himself to the production of wine.²³ Like Haraszthy, he plunged into this operation with great vigor. By 1855 he had 25,000 vines under cultivation,²⁴ and the following year he felt that his production was large enough to warrant the opening of a retail outlet in San Francisco.²⁵ Additional expansion and determined effort enabled him to surpass the firm of Kohler and Frohling and establish himself as the largest vintner in all of Southern California.²⁶ Such growth, one might expect, would have led Wilson to a concern for the industry in general, as noted in the case of Agoston Haraszthy. But apparently this was not so with either Wilson or with most Southern California wine producers.

On December 9, 1862, the first meeting of the California Wine Growers' Association was held in San Francisco. This organization was a sort of commercial union intended to promote the interest of California winegrowers, particularly in regard to the recent federal tax laws. That year Congress had voted in favor of assessing a five cents per gallon tax on wine and a twenty-five cents per gallon tax on brandy. At the same time, there was widespread distress over the *ad valorem* import duty on foreign wines which contained many loopholes, thereby creating stiff competition for domestic producers. Since San Francisco was the principal market for California wines, the major organizers of the winegrowers came from Northern California. Here again Haraszthy was a leading light. Though he held no office at the actual convention, he acted as president at the meeting in which all the plans for the convention were formulated.²⁷

In an attempt to gather as large a group as possible, the Southern California producers were urgently requested to attend, but the distance seemed greater than their interest, for only a handful of representatives appeared, even though they bore proxy votes for fellow growers. Some of the major producers such as Wilson and Sainsevain, who would presumably have been most distressed about the next taxation, were conspicuously absent. No less notable is the fact that the most influential member of the Southern delegation, Charles Kohler, was actually a resident merchant of San Francisco.²⁸

The absence of the Southern Californians proved portentous. Two days of talk ensued, but very few positive actions were drafted. When the organization adjourned, the most notable achievement was the composition of a memorial to Congress in which the winegrowers expressed their conclusion that the tax situation was "unjust, oppressive and impolitic."²⁹ One

can only speculate as to whether it was refusal to cooperate, unwillingness to commit funds, or general lack of interest that led to the disappointing results, but disappointing they must have been, for there was great difficulty in getting enough wine producers to participate in the next convention, even though the tax situation was not altered.

Just prior to the June 23rd meeting of the Wine Growers, the front page of the *Alta California* carried an urgent plea that vineyard owners send representatives to the convention, but the call went unheeded, and the convention proved a dismal failure. On the first day, the members adjourned without having transacted any business,³⁰ and on the second day a testimonial was drafted in a feeble attempt to reverse the failure of the first. The whole meeting betrayed a distinct note of despair—the only positive resolution was to refer those seeking advice on viticulture and wine-making to Haraszthy's new book.³¹ This rapidly dwindling interest is confirmed by the December, 1863 issues of the *Alta California*. According to the articles on the first convention, the Wine Growers' Association was to meet twice a year, in June and December, and in December, 1863, there was no meeting to report.

Apathy or disappointment must have replaced concern over taxes, because the Wine Growers' Association apparently held no more meetings for the next two and a half years. Yet not everyone was quite so willing to abandon the cause. Not long after the June, 1863 convention, Haraszthy decided to journey to Washington at his own expense, in hopes of getting some positive action on the tax situation. Though he had little effect on Congress, due to its preoccupation with the Civil War, the dauntless Colonel was not one to admit defeat easily. In March, 1865, he undertook a second trip to Washington, and a second time he footed all the bills.³²

Nevertheless, no one likes to shoulder other people's responsibilities. On September 30, 1865, Haraszthy wrote an open letter to the readers of the *Alta California* and called their attention to the striking contrast between his generous expenditure of time, money and energy in the promotion of California wine and the dangerous complacency of his fellow vintners. In this letter, he first points out that his past trips to Washington sought benefits that stretched well beyond personal gain. He claims that his efforts prevented a tax hike to ten cents per gallon on wine and to \$2.00 per gallon on brandy, an achievement which saved the state's wine producers \$20,000 according to his calculation. In citing these achievements, he turns specifically to vintners in Southern California and chastises them for not having assumed their just share of the responsibility:

This [the tax benefits Haraszthy claims credit for] gave new life and prosperity, especially to the Los Angeles wine growers, who now sell their grapes for one and a half dollars, when before they sold them from fifty to seventy-five cents per hundred pounds. But enough of that! Sometime or other they will awake of their interest and

contribute to the expense of having somebody represent their interests in the National capitol.³³

Further on in the letter, Haraszthy reiterates this plea for a Washington lobbyist, only this time he warns that if no action is taken, he "would not be astonished if the internal duty on wine would be raised to ten cents [per gallon] and on brandy to \$1.00 per gallon."³⁴

This particular letter undoubtedly went unread by many if not all of the Southern Californians about whom Haraszthy was so distressed, but criticism like this and the imminence of possible tax hikes must have exerted a persuasive influence on them. On April 3, 1866, only six months later, they reconvened the defunct Wine Growers' Association and echoed some of the same concerns of Haraszthy's letter. In a newspaper article on the proceedings that has survived in Bancroft's *Agricultural Scrapbooks*, one unidentified speaker is reported to have complained:

The culture of the wine is only in its infancy and can be fostered by a wise government into great national importance, and should not be strangled in the first period of its existence by oppression and prohibitory taxation. . . . The government hitherto has encouraged the planting of vineyards and should now protect them from ruin and abandonment by too heavy a burden of taxation.³⁵

Aside from the literal concern over taxation, the phrasing and imagery of the above passage bear striking similarity to various items of propaganda which Browne wrote on the wine issue while he was in Washington.³⁶ This curious resemblance may not have been mere coincidence—the vice-president of this convention was none other than B. D. Wilson. This implied connection between Browne and Wilson is further reinforced if we recall that Browne's letter to Wilson is dated two days after this convention and Browne set sail for New York only a week later. Suddenly the background for Browne's trip to Washington becomes strikingly clear. Browne was eager to get to Washington to impress the value of his knowledge about Western mining upon government officials, yet obviously he didn't want to finance such a journey himself. Wilson, as Browne's letter reveals, was interested in selling his vineyard estate, and since this transaction would involve an appreciable sum of money, Eastern cities provided the best prospects for a potential buyer. Concurrently, California wine producers needed an effective lobbyist in Washington. Since Browne was a well known writer and was familiar with Congressional life in the capitol,³⁷ he and Wilson probably agreed that a trip to the East by Browne might simultaneously realize all these different aims. Accordingly, Browne contacted various Northern vintners for support, as we learn from his letter to Wilson, while Wilson was undoubtedly instrumental in assembling the Wine Growers' convention in Los Angeles on April 3rd.

The only possible opponent to their plans would have been the ex-

assayer, Agoston Haraszthy, and he was in no position to indulge a time-worn grudge. For the past two years, the wine king of Northern California had been plagued with ever-increasing financial difficulties. The annual reports of his Buena Vista Viticultural Society for 1865 and 1866 indicate that his enterprise was totally incapable of achieving the glowing profits which the initial prospectus had anticipated.³⁸ In fact, Haraszthy was subjected to such adverse criticism for his handling of the Sonoma operations that he was forced to resign late in 1866.³⁹ Thus earlier that year Haraszthy must have been engaged in a desperate struggle to steer the B.V.V.S. through its financial crisis. Any tax increase would surely have been fatal. In view of such a threat, the generous Colonel might have been tempted to undertake a third trip to Washington, had his affairs in Sonoma not totally precluded the possibility. At the same time, despite their past conflicts, Haraszthy could not deny that Browne's credentials made him ideally suited to be the lobbyist whom he had called for six months earlier. Suddenly the man that had cost Haraszthy his treasury job was in a position to alleviate some pressing concerns of his new career, and this explains the surprising fact that Haraszthy actually gave the ex-treasury agent \$500 to help defray the expenses of his Washington trip, a fact revealed in Browne's letter to Wilson.

Whatever may have been the motives surrounding Browne's mission to represent the Wine Growers, there is convincing evidence that he diligently attended to the responsibilities he assumed. Aside from previously cited reports to his constituents, he wrote an eight-page pamphlet rather forthrightly entitled "Letter from J. Ross Browne to the Committee of Finance of the Senate in Relation to the Proposed Tax on Native Wines."⁴⁰ In addition, he busily engaged in the more conventional tactics of cultivating political contacts and seeking bargaining leverage wherever possible—an activity he complained of in his letters to his wife in Oakland.⁴¹ At the same time, Browne realized that the situation called for more than these conventional ploys. Winemakers were no different from whiskeymakers, tonicmakers, candlemakers or wagonmakers: all of them were concerned about the prospect of additional taxes and all of them were seeking some way of getting lawmakers to lend a sympathetic ear. The essential problem was to gain attention, and a long time prior to this Browne had learned that humor was an effective device for getting a reader interested in his story:

Tax crinoline if you please; tax the light of woman's eye; tax the light of other days; tax your own ingenuity; tax human forbearance; tax Patience sitting on a monument smiling at Grief; tax wax, hacks, sacks, backs, tacks; tack a tax on all attacks on tax; but don't, I beseech you, tax such a beverage as this . . . I take it for granted you have tried the Port. Sailors tell you, "any Port in a storm"; but I can assure you amid the storms of legislation, there is no Port like Wilson's native brand.⁴²

"But don't, I beseech you,
tax such a beverage as
this." In his *Washoe
Story*, Browne wryly
depicted one level of
appreciation for the vine.



THE POCKET PISTOL.

Apparently Browne wrote a whole series of humorous letters to prominent members of the House and Senate that were in the same vein as this excerpt from the one he sent to James Garfield where he refers to his associate Wilson. Although all the others have been lost, there is evidence to show that John Sherman and Thaddeus Stevens received such letters and responded warmly to their message.⁴³ Moreover, he scattered snatches of occasional verse among government officials, lobbyists and journalists in hopes of winning as much support as possible. One piece which was sent to the Secretary of the Treasury Hugh McCullough, his sometime supervisor, eventually found its way into the *New York Times*:

All men their duty ought to do,
And yet it must be said,
That Duty is a tax
Upon the poor man's bread.⁴⁴

Although somebody thought this doggerel worth publishing, Browne entertained no illusions about the true value of this work. He simply dashed these verses off as so much more material to bolster his campaign. Later he was to confide to his fellow Wine Growers, "for all the persuasive notes and pathetic rhymes that I wrote on these occasions, I hope posterity will forgive me."⁴⁵

Browne's conscientious industry combined with his clever wit enabled him to succeed well beyond the expectations of the Wine Growers. Instead of merely preventing a new tax hike, his primary aim, he was able to have the federal tax on domestic wine completely abolished. Moreover, he was instrumental in persuading the legislators to introduce an increased tax against foreign wine, although this was not actually passed until the following year.

Unfortunately, these triumphs were somewhat undercut by a couple of notable setbacks. First of all, the tax on brandy was hiked from fifty cents to \$2.00 per gallon. Although this backbreaking increase caused much concern and consternation among California vintners, Browne could do little against the insurmountable opposition that faced him. Next, he apparently failed in his efforts to sell Wilson's estate.⁴⁶ In his letter to Wilson on April 5th, he seemed rather optimistic on this account; consequently, the failure must have been quite disappointing.

Browne's efforts on his own account met with the greatest success of all, a testimony not so much to the direction of his energies as to his perceptive evaluation of the mining situation prior to his departure from California. As we saw earlier, he nourished some ulterior motives in seeking to represent the Wine Growers, which accounted for his willingness to assume a healthy portion of his expenses. While scrupulously attending to his avowed concern for the wine tax, he aligned himself with a delegation from Nevada in their efforts to get Congress to establish a national bureau of mining. His previous experience combined with the reputation he had attained from his publications in *Harper's Monthly* on Western mining enabled him to give persuasive support to their campaign. In July, 1866, Congress approved \$10,000 for the collection of general information concerning mining reserves in the West. According to the terms of the appropriation, two commissioners were to be selected to assume the various responsibilities.⁴⁷ At this point, Browne merely stepped forward and picked the plum. Not only did he possess the qualifications, but also the nominations came from the Secretary of the Treasury, and Browne had a record of six years of Western service in this department. Having achieved all that he possibly could have anticipated, he quickly embarked for California, anxious to report to the Wine Growers' Association and begin his work as the new federal Commissioner of Western Mineral Resources.

On September 29, 1866, Browne appeared at a regional meeting of the

Wine Growers that took in producers from Napa, Sonoma, Solano and Yolo Counties. At this meeting he served as Secretary under the President, A. Haraszthy.⁴⁸ A week later he attended another local meeting in Los Angeles. At this gathering, over which B. D. Wilson presided, Browne gave a long talk on his trip to Washington and on the wine situation in general.⁴⁹ These meetings rallied the support for the general convention that took place in San Francisco one month later. There the former congressional stenographer capably filled the office of Secretary.⁵⁰

In contrast to the conventions of 1862 and 1863, the meetings in 1866 reflected interest and active participation by all the state's wine producers. There can be little doubt that much of the response grew out of the widespread concern for the staggering brandy tax. Nevertheless, Browne and Wilson had won a major reprieve from all wine taxation and had contributed a great deal toward giving unity and direction to the state's scattered vintners. Whereas the Southern growers had formerly ignored the Wine Growers' Association, they now gave full support to the October 7th meeting in San Francisco; the results of this convention undoubtedly made a significant contribution to the fact that the brandy tax was dropped to \$1.00 the following year. Ironically, the key figure in this whole drama was J. Ross Browne, and he had no vested interest in wine whatsoever, even though he possessed enough vision to relate the grapes in the valley and the silver in the mountains. Browne believed that enthusiasm and persistence were the major ingredient for success in any endeavor. Such an approach to the delights of Bacchus was likely to prove quite intoxicating, as Browne's address to the Los Angeles Wine Growers attests:

You should preach it up to them—buzz it in their ears, force it down their throats—till every man, woman and child in the East has California wine on the brain—as I have.⁵¹

APPENDIX*

San Francisco, Cal.

Lake Vineyard
B. D. Wilson Esqu
Co.

April 5th 1866.

Los Angeles, Cal.

My dear Sir:

I avail myself of today's Express to send you a few lines advising you of the progress of our mission to Washington. We have had great difficulty in making the necessary collections and I fear will fall short of the amount originally fixed, by about \$2,000. Since I have taken the matter in hand, however, I am determined to put it through, even though I should lose my time and labor. The only reliable chance I see now is, in getting through the Vineyard enterprise of which we spoke, and on that subject I have the most sanguine expectations. Mr.

Butterworth will give me some valuable letters to his friends in New York and Philadelphia. He says he regards your property as the most magnificent estate in California, and I think will so inform to his friends. John and I both think we will have no difficulty in getting up a splendid enterprise on such a basis. I do not intend to ask less than \$250,000 for the whole property. We may have to come down a little, of course; but not lower than \$200,000 at any rate. The acceptance of any proposition made will be left to you—so that the ultimatum will be in your hands.

In reference to our tax mission, I have stronger hopes of success the more I inquire into it. Congress will not adjourn till about the 1st of September—notwithstanding the resolution of the House to adjourn in May.

The Buena Vista Society have contributed \$500; but we have collected nothing else.

Miss Sue has been enjoying herself to her heart's content over in Oakland. My people are delighted to have her with them, and she seems quite happy. John has been over nearly every evening, and is getting to be quite a beau with the girls. They are all as happy and lively as can be—so you must not think of getting Miss Sue home before our return from New York. My wife will take the best care of her, and the visit will do her good.

I sincerely trust our efforts for the benefit of the wine-growers and all our other undertakings will be successful. We leave on the Steamer of the 10th. Wishing you and M^{rs} Wilson and all the little ones health and happiness, I remain Very truly your friend,

J. Ross Browne

*This letter from J. Ross Browne to Benjamin Wilson (April 5, 1866) is reproduced by permission of *The Huntington Library, San Marino, California*.

NOTES

1. *Bancroft Scraps*, Vol. 19:2, p. 755. This is a collection of newspaper clippings and scattered publications related to the early development of California agriculture. These were originally assembled by H. H. Bancroft and are presently located at the Bancroft Library at the University of California, Berkeley.

2. David Michael Goodman, *A Western Panorama, 1849-1875: the travels, writings and influence of J. Ross Browne* (Glendale, California, 1966), p. 117. Richard H. Dillon, *J. Ross Browne: Confidential Agent in Old California* (Norman, Oklahoma, 1965), p. 143, places the amount at \$135,000, and Paul Fredricksen, "The Authentic Haraszthy Story," *Wines and Vines* (San Francisco, 1947), p. 5, offers the figure \$151,500.

3. Goodman, pp. 95-96, 117.

4. Dillon, p. 143, says that Haraszthy set the value at \$215,000, though Browne revised it downward to \$150,000.

5. Dillon, pp. 140-41.
6. Vincent P. Carosso, *The California Wine Industry: A Study of Frontier Years* (Berkeley, 1951), pp. 39-40. Haraszthy tried experiments first at his residence in Sauk City, Wisconsin (1845), then in San Diego (1850-1853) and finally in San Mateo (1853-1857).
7. Fredricksen, p. 5. Haraszthy actually planted 80,000 vines that year, though only 13,000 of them were his own. He persuaded a number of different wine producers to unite with him on his Sonoma project.
8. It should be noted that Haraszthy would have had great difficulty in obtaining a loan or mortgage to offset these expenses, since the government held legal ownership to all of his property, a further indication of the amount of wealth that he had acquired during his years with the Mint.
9. Carosso, p. 41, says the proceedings also left Haraszthy with \$25,000 worth of expenses.
10. Carosso, p. 74.
11. Vincent P. Carosso, *Commercial Development of California Viticulture, 1830-1890*, p. 307. (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California, Berkeley). The table providing this information appears only in Carosso's dissertation and not in his published book.
12. Haraszthy's book, *Grape Culture, Wines, and Wine Making with Notes on Agriculture and Horticulture* (New York, 1862), was perhaps the most comprehensive and scholarly book on this subject to appear in America during the nineteenth century.
13. Haraszthy first became a member in 1858. He was elected Vice President in 1861, and he became President in 1862. All the time Haraszthy used his influence on this board to promote the wine industry.
14. This undertaking proved to be one of the most frustrating experiences of Haraszthy's life, since the many hours he devoted to collecting these choice cuttings went for naught. The state legislature refused to appropriate sufficient funds to distribute the vines throughout the state. The failure of this visionary scheme cost Haraszthy \$10,000.
15. Fredricksen, p. 10.
16. Haraszthy's promotion clearly accounts for the simultaneous appearance of the articles "California as Vineland," *Atlantic Monthly* (May, 1864), and "Wine-making in California," *Harper's Monthly* (June, 1864).
17. Dillon, p. 26.
18. Goodman, p. 71.
19. John Walton Caughey, *The Indians of Southern California, 1852: the B. D. Wilson Report and a Selection of Contemporary Comment* (San Marino, California, 1952), p. 143.
20. Caughey, "Don Benito Wilson, An Average Southern Californian," *Huntington Library Quarterly* (April, 1939).
21. Thompson and West, *History of Los Angeles County* (Oakland, 1880), pp. 36-37.
22. Goodman, pp. 201-17.
23. "Don Benito Wilson," pp. 286-88.
24. *The California Wine Industry*, pp. 22-23.

25. This was the firm of Hobbs, Gilmore & Co. See the *Wine, Wool and Stock Journal* (March, 1863).

26. In 1864, Kohler and Frohling produced a formidable 125,000 gallons of wine, but Wilson was able to top that figure by 15,000 gallons. *Bancroft Scraps*, Vol. 19:2, p. 743.

27. *Alta California*, November 20, 1862.

28. *Alta California*, December 10, 1862.

29. *Idem*.

30. *Alta California*, June 24, 1863.

31. *Alta California*, June 25, 1863.

32. *The California Wine Industry*, pp. 80-81.

33. *Alta California*, September 30, 1865.

34. *Idem*.

35. *Bancroft Scraps*, Vol. 19:2, p. 753.

36. See Browne's letter to Garfield and his *Report to the Senate Committee on Finance*, in "Wines and Viniculture in California," Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

37. Browne had spent part of his early life in Washington where he served as a reporter for the *Congressional Globe*. In addition, his various tours about the world usually concluded with a stop in Washington, where he explored job opportunities.

38. Both reports and the original prospectus are contained in "Wines and Viniculture in California." See also *The California Wine Industry*, pp. 70-73.

39. *The California Wine Industry*, p. 72, and Fredricksen, p. 9.

40. The pamphlet is also contained in "Wines and Viniculture in California."

41. J. Ross Browne, *Muleback to the Convention: by the Reporter to the Constitutional Convention at Monterey in 1849*, edited by Lindley Byrum (San Francisco, 1950), p. xvii.

42. *The Vine in Early California*, edited by James D. Hart (San Francisco, 1955).

43. *Bancroft Scraps*, Vol. 19:2, pp. 756, 767.

44. Goodman, p. 219.

45. *Bancroft Scraps*, Vol. 19:2, p. 766.

46. Wilson continued to live at his Lake Vineyard estate until his death in 1878.

47. Goodman, pp. 221-22.

48. *Bancroft Scraps*, Vol. 19:2, p. 764.

49. *Bancroft Scraps*, Vol. 19:2, p. 766.

50. "Constitution of the California Wine Growers' Association, 1866," in "Wines and Viniculture in California."

51. *Bancroft Scraps*, Vol. 19:2, p. 766.

PICTURE SOURCES: Mrs. Lina Fergusson Browne, Berkeley, page 100 top left, page 111; California Historical Society, pages 101 and 106; The Wine Institute, page 100 right, page 103.

A Double Look at Utopia: The Llano Del Rio Colony

It may come as a surprise to some modern communitarians to learn that the search for community that is presently represented by scores of communal enclaves scattered throughout the state is actually an old, old story in California.

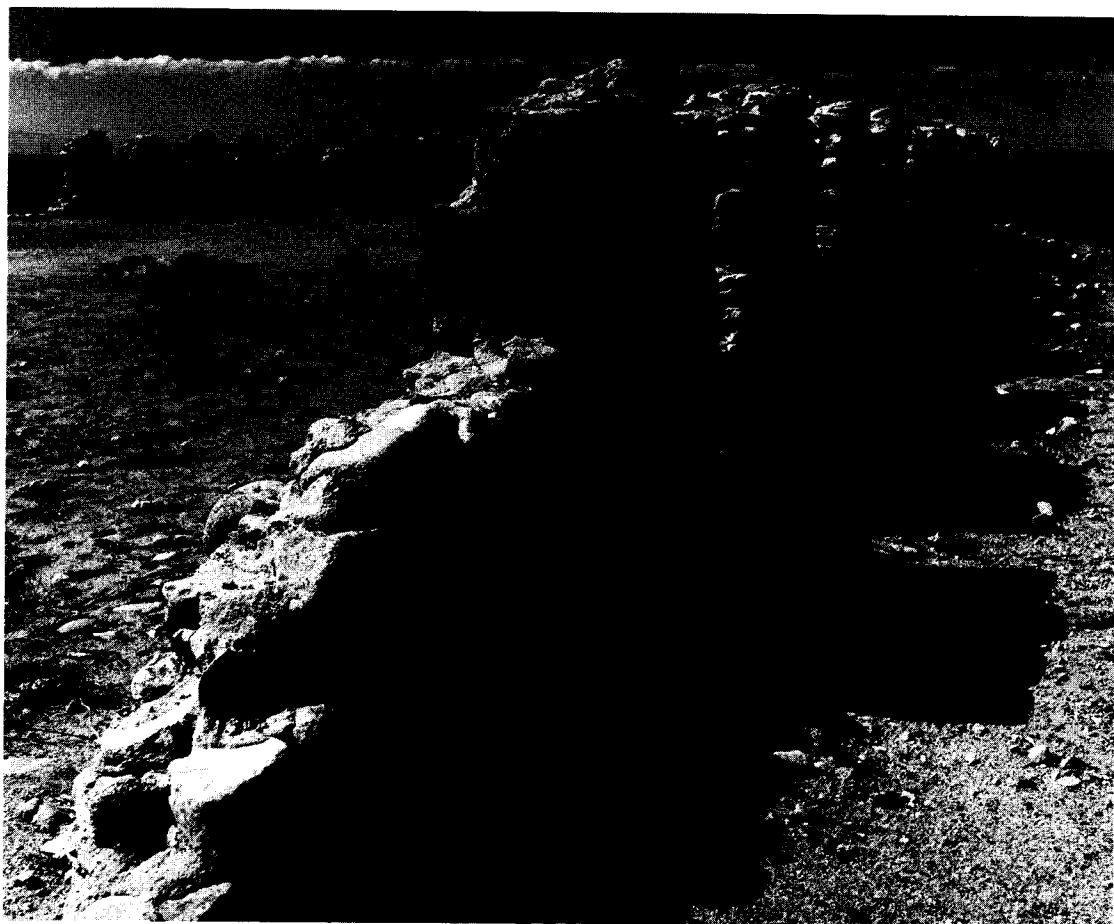
Interest in cooperative living experiments first reached California in the 1850's. In the next century, a larger number of viable communes developed here than in any other state in the Union. A total of seventeen major and scores of minor utopias flowered, withered, and eventually died. Idealistic motivations for these communities ranged from mysticism, to economic determinism, to health faddism. Many collectives sought the meaning of life through education, artistic expression, or contemplation. All tried with disappointing success to support themselves by means of farming, logging, mining, craftwork, or fiscal legerdemain.

One of the most successful of these utopian societies was the socialist community of Llano del Rio that burgeoned in the Antelope Valley, an offshoot of the Mojave Desert northeast of Los Angeles. In three vigorous, albeit contentious, years after its founding in 1914, it grew so rapidly that it outpaced the capacity of the land and available water to support its thousand members, and it was forced to migrate to a more spacious site in Louisiana, where it continued for eighteen more years before expiring in 1935.

Because of the present widespread interest in communal living styles, we are presenting on the following pages a two-part story on the California years of the Llano colony by two writers, separated by twenty years in time.

Part One, by the distinguished social critic, philosopher, and novelist Aldous Huxley (1894-1963) is a fascinating analysis of the philosophical and psychological implications of the experiment. His essay was first published in 1953 and we are reprinting it with the kind permission of his publishers, Harper & Row.

In Part Two, Paul Kagan, a young scholar and gifted photographer, reveals the day-to-day workings of the colony with contemporary photographs and documents that he has recently brought to light and supplements these with his own striking photographs of the crumbling walls of the long-dead colony. This pictorial essay is an adaptation of a chapter from his forthcoming book on California utopias.



LLANO TODAY: "Round the decay of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare, The lone
and level sands stretched far away."

Photograph by Paul Kagan

Aldous Huxley

Distinguished English novelist, essayist, poet, literary journalist, biographer, and philosopher who settled in California in 1937. Explored the idea of a Utopian society in the well-known Brave New World (1932) and dealt with mystical philosophy in other works.

I. LLANO DEL RIO

Ozymandias, the Utopia That Failed*

IN THIS PART of the desert Ozymandias consists of an abandoned silo and the ruins of a cow byre. "The hands that mocked"—mocked themselves in the very act of so laboriously creating these poor things—were the hands of a thousand idealists; "the heart that fed" belonged to a Marxist lawyer, with a Gladstone collar and the face of a revivalist or a Shakespearean actor. Job Harriman was his name; and if the McNamara brothers had not unexpectedly confessed to the dynamiting of the *Times* building, he would in all probability have become the first Socialist mayor of Los Angeles. But with that confession, his passionately defended clients ceased to be proletarian martyrs and became the avowed killers of twenty-six unfortunate printers and newspapermen. Job Harriman's chance of winning the election abruptly declined to zero. Another man would have admitted defeat. Not Harriman. If Los Angeles would not have him as its mayor, he would go out into the wilderness and there create a new, better city of his own. On May Day, 1914, the Llano del Rio Co-operative Colony (incorporated first in California and later under the more easy-going laws of Nevada) received its first contingent of settlers.

Three years later, in the *Llano View Book*, an anonymous enthusiast wrote of the event with a mixture of biblical and patriotic solemnity. "May first, 1914, a hardy little band of pioneers, likened unto those who courageously founded the Plymouth Colony in Massachusetts so many years ago, went forth into the Antelope Valley to found another Colony, destined through the years to be quite as historical and quite as significant of the founding of a New Civilization." And this May Day promise had already been fulfilled. "The success of complete cooperation has now been demonstrated convincingly. The demonstration is the most thorough that can be asked for." The colony is now "too firmly established to be affected by anything except a concerted and organized effort backed by Capital. Its fu-

*From the book *Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow*. Copyright 1956 by Aldous Huxley. Reprinted by permission of Harper & Row.

ture is clear." These words were penned and printed, at the Llano publishing house, in the summer of 1917. Before the year was out, that clear future was a thing of the past. The company was bankrupt, the colonists had dispersed. Within twenty-four hours of their departure playful iconoclasts had smashed five hundred dollars' worth of windows; within a week, a large frame hotel and several scores of houses and workshops had been demolished and carried off piecemeal by the homesteaders who precariously represented capitalism in the wilderness. Only the silo and the foundations of the cow byre remained; they were made of concrete and could not be hauled away.

Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare,
The lone and level sands stretch far away.

A more squeamish artist than Shelley would have avoided the reduplication of those alliterative epithets. "Boundless and bare," "lone and level"—one is reminded of a passage in Lewis Carroll's versified essay on poetic diction: "The wild man went his weary way to a strange and lonely pump." But the general effect, albeit a little cheap, is dramatically good and even sufficiently true, despite the fact that the sands hereabouts are neither bare nor indefinitely level. A few miles south of Ozymandias the desert tilts upwards to a range of wooded and, in winter, snow-covered mountains. To the north stretches a plain; but its levels are dotted with isolated buttes and rimmed, in the far distance, by other ranges of mountains. And over all the ground spreads the thin carpet of those astonishingly numerous plants and bushes which have learned to adapt themselves to a land where it rains eight or nine inches during the winter and not at all from May to November.

To the brute facts of meteorology in arid country Job Harriman was resolutely indifferent. When he thought of human affairs, he thought of them only as a Socialist, never as a naturalist. Thus, with a population of only three hundred thousand, Los Angeles was already becoming uncomfortably dry. But because its water would enrich the real-estate operators, Job Harriman opposed the construction of the Owens Valley Aqueduct. Worse, he rationalized his opposition by the obviously absurd statement that the city could grow indefinitely on its local resources. The same ill-informed optimism made nonsense of his plan for Llano. In a good year (and every other year is bad) water from the Big Rock Creek makes possible the raising, at Llano, of crops and cattle worth perhaps a hundred thousand dollars. The Colony owned rights to part of this water. On its irrigated acres fifty or, at the most, a hundred persons might have eked out a precarious living. But by the beginning of 1917 Harriman had accepted the applications of almost a thousand eager co-operators. Every applicant had to buy two thousand shares of the company's stock, for which he was to pay five hundred, or preferably a thousand, dollars in cash, and the bal-

ance in labor. In a year or two, it was assumed, the Colony would be self-sufficient; until then, it would have to live on the cash invested by its members.

For as long as the cash lasted, times were good, enthusiasm high and achievement correspondingly great. A wagon road was driven through the foothills, up into the timberland of the San Gabriel Mountains. Trees were felled and laboriously brought down to the sawmill in the plain, below. A quarry was opened, a lime kiln constructed. The tents of the first colonists gave place to shacks, the shacks to houses. Next a hotel was built, to accommodate the interested visitors from the infernal regions of capitalism. Schools and workshops appeared as though by magic. Irrigation ditches were dug and lined. Eighty horses and a steam tractor cleared, leveled, plowed and harvested. Fruit trees were planted, pears canned, alfalfa cut and stored, cows milked and "the West's most modern rabbitry" established. Nor were the spiritual needs of the colonists neglected. From the print shop issued two weekly newspapers and a stream of pamphlets. Among the amenities were a woman's exchange, a Socialist local, several quartets, two orchestras, a brass band and a mandolin club.

One of the old-timers has often talked to me nostalgically of that brass band, those mandolins and barber-shop ensembles. What pleasure, on a mild night in May or June, to sit out of doors under one's privately owned cottonwood tree and listen, across a mile of intervening sagebrush, to the music of Socialists! The moon is full, the last snow still glitters on the summit of Mount Baden Powell and, to the accompaniment of the steady croaking of frogs along the irrigation ditch and the occasional frantic shrieks of the coyotes, the strains of Sousa and "Sweet Adeline" and the Unfinished Symphony transcribed for mandolins and saxophone, come stealing with extraordinary distinctness upon the ear. Only Edward Lear can do full justice to such an occasion. It must have been, in the very highest degree, "meloobious and genteel." But, alas, every magical night is succeeded by yet another busy morning. The *al fresco* concert was delightful; but that did not make it any easier to collect, next day, from the communal treasury. As well as the mandolins, my old-timer friend recalls his efforts to get paid for services rendered. After long haggling he would think himself lucky if he came away with two dollars in silver and the rest in hay or pumpkins.

For most of the co-operators, the morning after a concert was less disillusioning. I have met three or four ex-colonists—older, sadder, possibly wiser—and all of them bore witness to the happiness of those first months at Llano. Housing, to be sure, was inadequate; food monotonous, and work extremely hard. But there was a sense of shared high purpose, a sustaining conviction that one had broken out of an age-old prison and was marching, shoulder to shoulder with loyal comrades, towards a promised land. "Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive." And this applies to all dawns without distinction—the dawn of a war and the dawn of a peace, the dawn of revolution and the dawn of reaction, the dawn of passion and in due course the blessed coolness of the



LLANO TODAY: Massive brick kiln that once supplied thousands of bricks for the colony's buildings, crumbles in the desert sun, victim of a half century of wind, weather, and vandalism.

Photograph by Paul Kagan

dawn of indifference, the dawn of marriage and then, at Reno, the long awaited dawn of divorce. In co-operative communities dawns are peculiarly rosy. For this very reason, midday is apt to seem peculiarly stifling, and the afternoons intolerable and interminable. To the ordinary hazards of community life Llano added the insurmountable obstacles of too many people, too little water and, after three years, no money.

As the situation grew worse, the propagandists became more lyrical. "Llano offers hope and inspiration for the masses. . . . Its purpose is to solve unemployment, to assure safety and comfort for the future and old age." And the words were accompanied by a detailed plan of the city which was just about to be built. "It will be different in design from any other in the world. Its houses will be comfortable, sanitary, handsome, home-like, modern and harmonious with their surroundings, and will insure greater privacy than any other houses ever constructed. They are unique and designed especially for Llano." The publicity worked. Applications and, more important, checks kept steadily coming in. With each arrival of an idealist's life savings, there was a respite. But a respite at a price. For with those life-savings came another member and his family. The Colony had acquired three days' supply of food, but it had also acquired five extra mouths. Each successive windfall went a little less far. And meanwhile our old friend, Human Nature, was busily at work.

In his office and in court Harriman was a successful attorney. Outside he was an idealist and theorizer, whose knowledge was not of men and women but of sociological abstractions and the more or less useful fictions of economics.

In a preface which he contributed in 1924 to Ernest Wooster's *Communities Past and Present* Harriman writes, (how touchingly!) about his self-imposed ignorance and subsequent enlightenment. "Believing that life arose out of chemical action and that form was determined by the impinging environment, I naturally believed that all would react more or less alike to the same environment." But in fact they didn't. Against all the rules, "we found more well-to-do-men among the unselfish than there were among the selfish." Worse still, "we found to our surprise that there were more selfish men among the poor in proportion to their number, than there were among the well-to-do. . . ." Worst and most unexpected was the fact that the selfish "persisted in their course with a persistence that was amazing." From amazement the poor man passed to downright "confusion" at the discovery that there are "those who are extremely active (in the work of the Colony) and yet who are also extremely selfish. If their behavior is closely observed, they will invariably be found to be working for self-glory or for power." These discoveries of the immemorably obvious led him to two conclusions, whose extremely unoriginal character is the guarantee of their soundness. First, "theories and intellectual concepts play a very small part in our reactions." And, second, "economic determination seems to play no part in

separating the sheep from the goats." In the process of reaching these conclusions, Job Harriman had to pass through ten years of an excruciatingly educative purgatory.

No effort had been made to exclude from Llano the sort of people whose presence is fatal to any close-knit community, and there was no system of rules by which, having been admitted, such persons might be controlled. From the first Harriman found himself confronted by a cantankerous minority of trouble-makers. There were the idealistic purists, who complained that he was making too many compromises with the devils of capitalism; there were the malingerers, who criticized but refused to work; there were the greedy, with their clamor for special privileges; there were the power lovers who envied him and were ambitious to take his place. Meeting secretly in the desert, the "brush gang," as these malcontents were called, plotted his overthrow. It came at last at the hands of a trusted lieutenant who, in Harriman's absence, disposed of the Llano property to private owners—including, in a big way, himself. But, long before this final catastrophe, there had been nothing to eat, and the majority of the colonists had returned, without their savings, to the world of free competition. A few, under Harriman's leadership, migrated in a special train to Louisiana, where they had collectively bought an abandoned lumber camp and several thousand denuded acres. There was another blissful dawn, followed by a prolonged struggle with a hundred ferocious Texans, who had been invited to join the community, but had not, apparently, been told that it was a co-operative. When these extremely rugged individualists had gone, taking with them most of the Colony's livestock and machinery, the survivors settled down to the dismal realities of life on an inadequate economic foundation. Work was hard, and for diversion there were only the weekly dances, the intrigues of several rival brush gangs and the spectacle of the struggle for power between the ailing Harriman and an ex-insurance salesman of boundless energy, called George T. Pickett. By 1924, Harriman was out—for good.

The new manager was one of those "born leaders," who have no patience with democratic methods and are seriously convinced that they always know best. "I'd rather work with a bunch of morons than with a lot of over-educated kickers." But the colonists—or at least some of them—refused to accept his benevolent dictatorship. Brush-gangs bored from within; heretics and seceders campaigned from without. From the neighboring town of Leesville two dissident and mutually hostile groups bombarded the loyalists with anonymous letters and denounced the management and, of course, one another in any left-wing paper that would print their articles.

And all the time New Llano was as far as ever from self-sufficiency. The Colony could boast of no less than thirty-eight industrial and agricultural departments. But all of them, unfortunately, were running at a loss. The only solid asset was Pickett's incomparable salesmanship; the only steady source of income, his far-ranging drives for funds. Through the years a trickle of

money flowed in—never quite enough to buy the colonists new shoes, but sufficient at least to prevent actual starvation. In the thirties wildcatters persuaded the management that there was oil on the colony's property. A number of idealists were talked into a speculative investment, and three wells were drilled. Needless to say, all of them were dry.

Then came the Revolution. While Pickett was away, soliciting Federal funds at Washington, his enemies called a meeting of the entire membership. By a majority vote of the minority who attended, Pickett was deposed. For the dominant brush gang and its supporters, what a blissful dawn! For the rest, it looked like the midnight of all hope. The author of a rare little book, *The Crisis in Llano Colony, An Epic Story*, belonged to the second group. To express his feeling about Pickett, mere prose seemed inadequate. The history of the conspiracy culminates in a lyric.

He came from out the Land of Graft
To lend a hand to Llano,
Its industry and handicraft,
And added to its cargo.

He quit the struggle in the bog,
Where devil take the hindmost,
He left the realm where dog eat dog,
With Equity his guide-post.

A better life the world to show,
A work he tires of never,
While men may come and men may go,
Will he go on forever.

"Forever" was perhaps a little too optimistic. But the fact remains that, in due course, George T. Pickett did come back to Llano. In his *Can We Co-operate?* Bob Brown prints a letter from one of the surviving colonists, dated November, 1937. "Things in hell of a shape here. No food for the past week but sweet potatoes, and darn small ones at that. . . . No electricity for two months, and I buy plenty kerosene. . . . Very little money coming in, and what little there is Pickett takes it for his own use. Seems to think everything belongs to him. . . . Lots of people pretty mad here since Pickett took over again. . . . I expect few people on the outside would believe the truth about this place. Just try and tell some of those old friends, who sent money in through *The Colonist*, that one works 365 days a year in this Socialist paradise, then supplies one's own clothes, most of one's own food, light, etc., and they might say one was a liar."

Two years later it was finished. All the Colony property had been sold up, and the colonists (most of them old people who had invested their savings and their work in Llano for the sake of security in their declining years) were on relief. All that remained, after twenty-five years of idealistic struggle, was a small brick hotel and a recreation hall.

And on the pedestal these words appear:
 "My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:
 Look on my work, ye Mighty, and despair!"

But *despair* is only the penultimate word, never the last. The last word is *realism*—the acceptance of facts as they present themselves, the facts of nature and of human nature, and the primordial fact of that spirit which transcends them both and yet is in all things. The original Ozymandias was no realist; nor was poor Mr. Harriman. In the conditions prevailing at Llano and, later, at New Llano, integral co-operation was as fatally condemned to self-destruction as are, in any circumstances, the ambitions of a king of kings. Fortunately, unrealistic co-operation does no harm except to the co-operators. Unrealistic imperialism, on the other hand, cannot commit suicide without inflicting misery and death upon innumerable victims.

The economic problems of community living can be solved by any group possessed of common sense and capital. The psychological problems are much more difficult and demand, for their solution, something rarer than either cash or shrewdness.

Life in a community is life in a crowd—the same old crowd, day in, day out. At Llano the colonists divided mankind into two groups—themselves and people "on the outside." The same distinction, in the same words, is made by convicts. "On the inside" are we; "on the outside" lies the whole wide world. Of those nineteenth-century American communities which survived long enough to rear a second generation of co-operators, few were able to resist the impact of the bicycle. Mounted on a pair of wheels, the young people were able to explore that unredeemed but fascinating world "on the outside." After each expedition, it was with mounting reluctance that they returned to the all too familiar crowd. In the end reluctance hardened into refusal. They went out one day and never came back.

The attraction of life "on the outside" can be counteracted in several ways. Shared religious faith is helpful, but not, of itself, enough. One can believe as the others believe, and yet detest the sight of them. "*Ave Virgo!*—Gr-rr—you swine!" Browning's fictional soliloquist is echoed, more decorously, by such real and historical figures as the saintly Dame Gertrude More. "Living in religion (as I can speak by experience), if one is not in a right course of prayer and other exercises between God and our soul, one's nature groweth much worse than it would have been if one had lived in the world." It grows worse because there is no escape from the objects of one's unreasoned abhorrence. "On the outside," we are constantly imitating the conduct of the Old Man in the limerick, "who purchased a steed, which he rode at full speed, to escape from the people of Basing." "On the inside," be it of Alcatraz, of Llano, of a cloister, there are no steeds; and unless they can learn the difficult art of being charitable, the inmates of such penal, socialistic or religious colonies will find themselves condemned to a life sentence of boredom, distaste and loathing. Vows, rules and a hierarchy can forcibly con-



LLANO TODAY: Two lonely fireplaces, standing in the desert, are all that remain of the community center where Socialists once sang, danced, and argued the night away before blazing fires of juniper.

Photograph by Paul Kagan

strain a man to remain in his community. Only "a course of prayer, by which the soul turneth towards God and learneth from Him the lesson of truly humbling itself," can soften his heart to the point where it becomes susceptible of loving even his exasperating brothers.

At Llano shared religious faith was replaced, less effectively, by a vague Pickwickian belief that, thanks to Socialism, everything would be much better in the twenty-second century. "You've got to get up on some private hill to view the future. I've been on this job ten years, and there has been some real progress. But when I'm overwhelmed by the ugliness, the seemingly useless struggle of it all, I just climb up my hill and see the whole place as it should be."

More effective, as a binding force, than religious or Utopian belief, is the presence among the faithful of some dominant and fascinating personality. These are the human magnets, in relation to whom ordinary men and women behave like iron filings. Their attractive power is hard to analyze and explain. Impressiveness of appearance and high intelligence are sometimes present, but not invariably. A glittering eye, a mysterious manner, a disconcerting fluctuation between remoteness and concern—these are never amiss. A gift of the gab is useful, and becomes quite invaluable when combined with the right kind of voice—the kind of voice which seems to act directly on the autonomic nervous system and the subconscious mind. Finally, indispensably, there is the will of iron, there is the unswerving tenacity of purpose, the boundless self-confidence—all the qualities which are so conspicuously absent in the common run of anxious, bewildered and vacillating humanity. A community having capital, sound management and a leader possessed of magnetic qualities can hardly fail to survive.

Unfortunately (or rather, thank God!) the magnetic leader is not immortal. When his current is turned off, the iron filings fly apart, and yet another experiment in integral co-operation is at an end.

Is there any reason, someone may ask, why it should ever have been begun? For the Marxist, a religious community is anathema and a secular co-operative colony represents no more than "a working-class form of escape, corresponding to the white-collar boy's flight to Montparnasse." For the capitalist, any kind of integral co-operation is a gratuitous absurdity which might, if it worked too well, become dangerously subversive. But for anyone who is interested in human beings and their so largely unrealized potentialities, even the silliest experiment has value, if only as demonstrating what ought not to be done. And many of the recorded experiments were far from silly. Well planned and carried out with skill and intelligence, some of them have contributed significantly to our knowledge of that most difficult and most important of all the arts—the art of living together in harmony and with benefit for all concerned. Thus, the Shakers cultivated the sense of togetherness by means of the sacramental dance, through collective "speaking with tongues" and in spiritualistic séances, at which mediumship was free to all.

The Perfectionists practiced mutual criticism—a drastic form of group therapy which often worked wonders, not only for neurotics, but even for the physically sick. Sex is “the lion of the tribe of human passions”; to tame the lion, John Humphrey Noyes devised, and for thirty years his community at Oneida put into effect, a system of “Complex Marriage,” based upon “Male Continence.” Separated, by means of a carefully inculcated technique, from propagation, the “amative function” was refined, taught good manners, reconciled with Protestant Christianity and made to serve the purpose of religious self-transcendence. “Amativeness,” Noyes could truthfully write, “is conquered and civilized among us.” A similar conquest had been achieved, in India, by those Tantrik prophets, in whom the world-affirming spirit of the Vedas had come to terms, through sacramentalism, with the world-denying spirit of Jainism, Yoga and early Buddhism. In the West, however, Noyes’s experiment stands alone—not indeed in its intention (for many before him had tried to do the same thing), but in the realistic and therefore successful way it was carried out. The members of the Oneida Community seem to have been happier, healthier, better behaved and more genuinely religious than most of their contemporaries “on the outside.” That they should have been forced, under the threat of ecclesiastical persecution, to abandon their experiment is a real misfortune. The course of Freudian and post-Freudian psychology would have run a good deal more smoothly, if there had been a place, like Oneida, where theorists might have tested their frequently preposterous notions against the realities of a co-operating group, in which the lion no longer raged and a reconciliation between sex, religion and society was an accomplished fact.

Except in a purely negative way, the history of Llano is sadly uninformative. All that it teaches is a series of don’ts. Don’t pin your faith on a water supply which, for half the time, isn’t there. Don’t settle a thousand people on territory which cannot possibly support more than a hundred. Don’t admit to your fellowship every Tom, Dick and Harry who may present himself. Don’t imagine that a miscellaneous group can live together, in closest physical proximity, without rules, without shared beliefs, without private and public “spiritual exercises” and, without a magnetic leader. At Llano everything that ought not to have been done was systematically done. A pathetic little Ozymandias is all that remains to tell the tale.

From where I used to live, on the fringes of what had been the colony’s land, this Ozymandias was the only visible trace of human handiwork. Gleaming in the morning light or black against the enormous desert sunsets, that silo was like a Norman keep rising, against all the probabilities, from the sagebrush. *The splendour falls on castle walls. Childe Roland to the dark tower came*—came, and looking through the opening in the dark tower’s wall, saw within a heap of tin cans, some waste paper and half a dozen empty bottles of Pepsi-Cola. The ruin stands very close to the highway and there are still a few motorists prepared, at a pinch, to walk a quarter of a mile

But Ozymandias is not the only relic of the co-operative past. Two or three miles to the southeast, on the almost obliterated wagon road over which the colonists once hauled their timber from the mountains, is the Socialist cemetery.

It lies astride of the four-thousand-foot contour line, that ecological frontier where the creosote bushes abruptly give place to junipers, the Joshua trees to common yuccas. One ancient and gigantic Joshua—the last outpost of the great army of Joshuas encamped on the wide plains below the foothills—stands like a sentinel on guard over the dead. In a little tumbledown enclosure of wooden palings and chicken wire three or four anonymous mounds have returned completely to the desert.

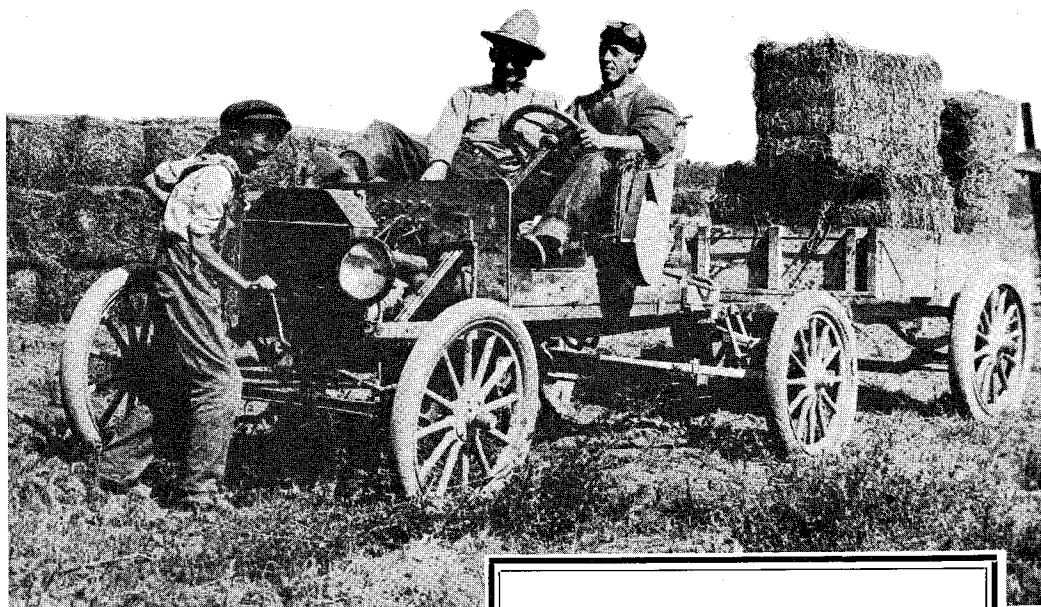
On what was once bare and weeded ground, the sage and the buckwheat have taken root again and are flourishing as though they had never been disturbed. Nearby a concrete headstone commemorates someone who, to judge by his name, must have been of Scandinavian origin. His epitaph is purely quantitative, and all the inscription tells us is that he lived sixty-eight years, seven months, four days and eleven hours. The most pretentious of the tombs is a mausoleum in the form of a hollow cube of cement. Entering through the broken door one finds a slab, headstone and an incredible quantity of desiccated droppings of small rodents. The dance goes on. A human pattern, made up of the patterns of patterns, is resolved into the simpler forms that are its elements. Another vortex catches and draws them into itself. Patterns are built up into patterns of a higher order, and for a few months a little pattern of these patterns of patterns hurries, squeaking, along the rat roads.

Outside, the Joshua tree stands guard in the empty sunlight, in the almost supernatural silence. A monstrous yucca at the limit of its natural habitat? A symbol within the cosmic symbol? The eye travels out across the plain. The buttes are like kneeling elephants and beyond them, far away, are the blue ghosts of mountains. There is a coolness against the cheek, and from overhead comes the scaly rattling of the wind in the dead dry leaves of the Joshua tree. And suddenly the symbol is essentially the same as what it symbolizes; the monstrous yucca in the desert is at once a botanical specimen and the essential Suchness. What we shall all know, according to the *Barbo Thodol*, at the moment of Death may also be known by casual flashes, transfiguringly, while we inhabit this particular pattern of patterns. There is a consciousness of the Pure Truth, like a light “moving across the landscape in springtime in one continuous stream of vibration.” Be not afraid. For this “is the radiance of your own true nature. Recognize it.” And from out of this light comes “the natural sound of Reality reverberating like a thousand thunders.” But, again, be not afraid. For this is the natural sound of your own real self—a thousand thunders which have their source in silence and in some inexpressible way are identical with silence.

II. LLANO DEL RIO

Portrait of a California Utopia

by Paul Kagan



Cranking up one of the colony's two trucks in 1915.

In 1914, about 45 miles north of Los Angeles, Llano del Rio Co-operative colony was founded by a handful of visionary California socialists. Based on the principles of equal ownership, equal wages, and equal social opportunities, Llano was meant to demonstrate practically that co-operation could work. Men and women came to Llano to leave behind worries of job insecurity, unemployment, and the chaos of crime and pollution spawned by the great cities.

WANTED 1000 MEN

LLANO COLONY, in the Antelope Valley, California, needs single men and women and married men and their families.

This is an opportunity of a lifetime to solve the problem of unemployment and provide for the future of yourself and children.

We have land and water, machinery and experts for every department of production.

No experience as an agriculturist needed. Men and women of nearly all useful occupations in demand. Every member a shareholder in the enterprise.

For full particulars address

Mescal Water and Land Co.

JOB HARRIMAN, President

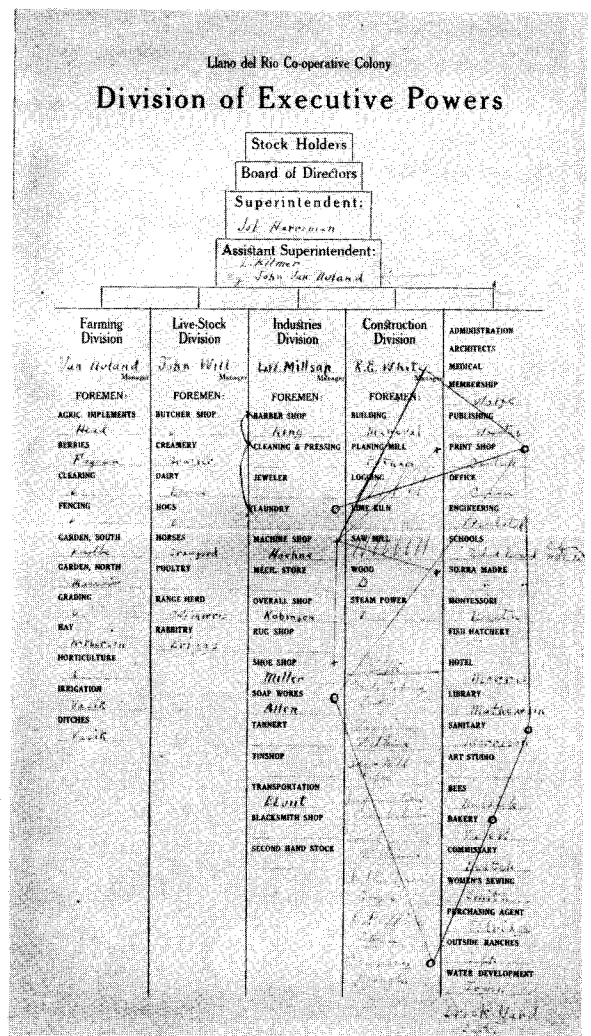
924 Higgins Building, 2nd and Main Street,
Los Angeles, Cal.

*Early call to join the colony, from
The Western Comrade, June, 1915*

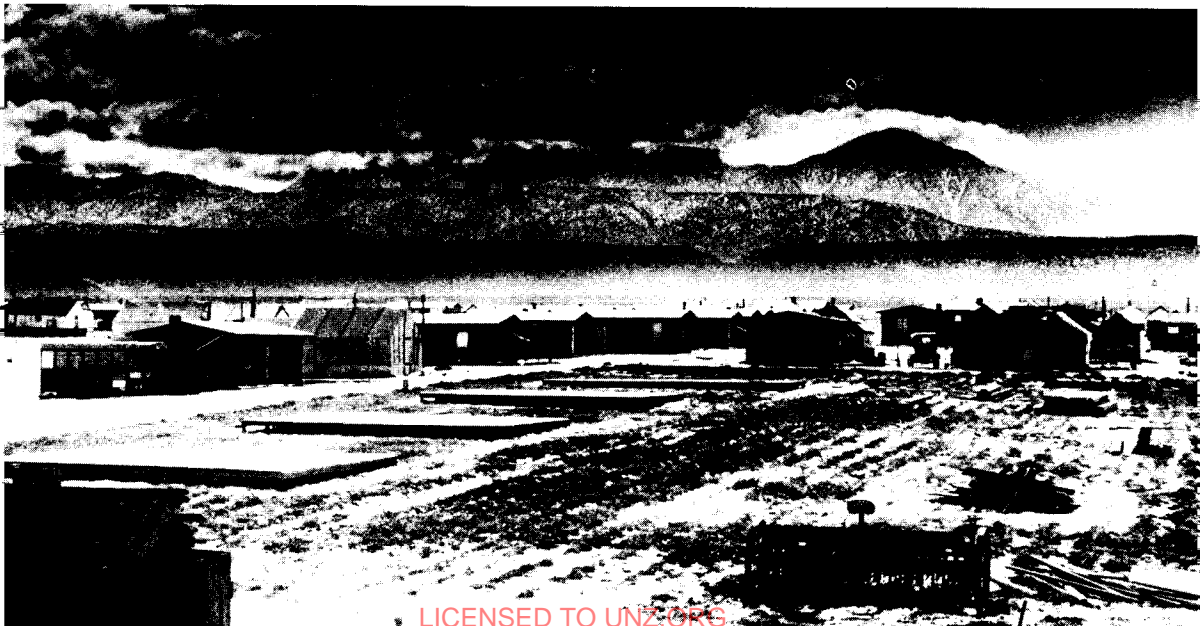


Marxist lawyer, Job Harriman, "with the face of a revivalist or a Shakespearean actor" (Huxley), promoted Llano as a viable example of the workability of socialism.

Organization chart (ca. 1916) reveals the profusion of tasks carried on in the colony. Members' names were posted to work specialities by a Managing Board that shifted the men around to prevent their being kept at unpopular tasks.



A chill blanket of snow emphasizes the bleak setting of the colony, located in the Mojave Desert at the eastern base of the San Gabriel Mountains, 20 miles from Palmdale. At the time of this photograph (ca. 1916), most of the original tent houses were still in use.



High on an arid hillside near Palmdale, colonists lettered a 220-foot sign of whitewashed boulders "visible for twenty miles and legible for five" in 1916 to promote the candidacies of two Socialist office-seekers and to advertise the colony. The Western Comrade; (right) was the official organ of the socialist Party in California, 1913 to 1918.

Lacking capital resources, the colony often had to reimburse its members in services rather than cash. The meal-ticket was a fixture of the labor-exchange program.



The WESTERN COMRADE

The Arrow Points Your Road to Freedom

At Llano, 800 Socialists are building the commonwealth of economic freedom. They own their industries, their land and its resources. They are succeeding. They offer you the opportunity to become a member in the greatest of all co-operative enterprises, the most complete ever established.

THIS PICTURE
 runs on the cover page of the last issue of the WESTERN COMRADE, gained the approval of Socialists for the builders of the sign.

LLANO SOCIALISTS
 built this 82-acre permanent political land of rocks and boulders. 200 columns of Llano-made whitewash makes it visible for twenty miles. Dimensions: 220 feet long, 100 feet deep. Make and legible for five miles. Your request is built. 600 hours. Seen each week by 6000 tourists on the Southern Pacific railroad.

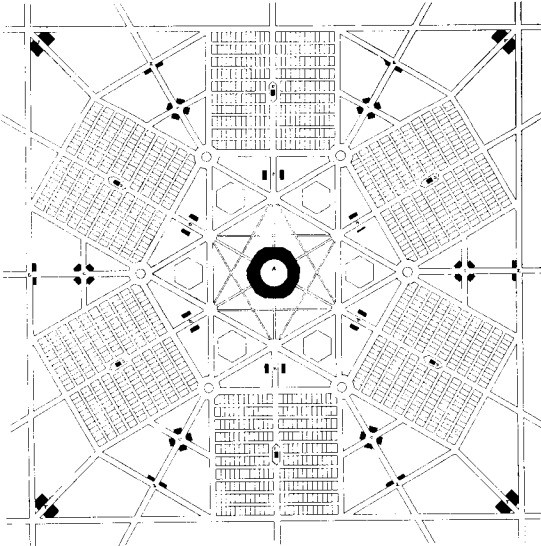
FIVE CENTS

Llano's principal founder, Job Harriman, grew up on an Indiana farm and was trained for the ministry, but he rejected religion for the study of law. Harriman moved to California in 1886, and became a socialist around 1890. During the 1890's he was increasingly attracted to the utopian movement. He joined a Nationalist club and also became interested in Altruria, a short-lived California community inspired by William Dean Howells' 1894 novel, *A Traveler from Altruria*. For twenty years, Harriman was active in socialist politics. He was a vice-presidential candidate on a ticket headed by Eugene Debs in 1900, and came close to being elected mayor of Los Angeles in 1911. A major issue in this campaign was the case of the radical McNamara brothers who were accused of bombing the Los Angeles *Times* building. Harriman supported the brothers' cause, but a few days before the election they confessed to the crime, firmly ending any chance Harriman had of winning.

Turning from politics, Harriman decided to start a colony. A site in the Antelope Valley was chosen for the location of the community after a long search. An earlier colony of temperance advocates had completed some of the work necessary to irrigate the land, and still held bonds in the name of the Mescal Water and Land Company, which Harriman and his supporters were able to buy at a low price. One source reported that Harriman paid only \$5 down! Harriman advertised his colony in the socialist press and began selling company stock late in 1913. Walter Millsap, a long term member of the colony, described the results in a taped interview:



Carload of new colonists, with their luggage roped to the running boards, arrives at the main entrance on Llano Boulevard. New residents were a mixed blessing. Although each new family contributed a small nest egg to the general fund, it also added more mouths to be fed from the colony's limited foodstocks.



Grandiose plan for the city of Llano (Western Comrade, March 1915) incorporated radial and symmetrical features that were common to most utopian proposals of the period, and are still popular elements in communitarian plans today.

Applicants were required to fill out an extensive questionnaire that probed their beliefs with queries such as these.

Application for Membership in the

Llano Del Rio Co-operative Colony

Only industrious men and women of high ideals and constructive ideas with reputations for good citizenship are desirable members of the LLANO DEL RIO CO-OPERATIVE COLONY. If you are willing to put your whole ability and spirit into this enterprise, to work in harmony with your fellow co-operators, and to abide by the rules adopted, you will be cordially welcomed as part of this noble enterprise.

- ☐ Do you believe in the profit system?
- ☐ What should be done with an article that evidently was lost by someone?
- ☐ Will solving the economic problem ultimately lead to solving the social problem?
- ☐ Is happiness a state of mind or dependent upon affluent material conditions?
- ☐ Do you believe in a peaceful settlement of ALL misunderstandings?

They made the colossal blunder of selling stock according to the ordinary method—you get a fiscal agent and he goes out and sells stock for a commission. The agent promised everything under the sun and heaven on earth if they'd sign on the dotted line and give him \$500, why they could just live in paradise from then on. It wasn't quite paradise.¹

Harriman soon reorganized the Mescal Water and Land Company as the Llano del Rio Company of California. The company issued 2,000,000 shares of stock, valued at \$1 each. Membership in the community required the purchase of 2,000 shares. Members were at first asked to make a down payment of \$500, later of \$750. The balance was to be paid at the rate of a dollar a day out of the \$4 a day wages the colony offered. This amount was never actually paid members, but almost no one cared. A member said:

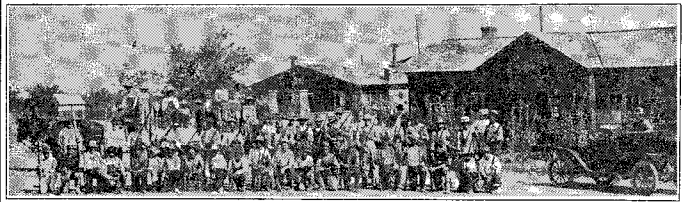
All the bookkeeping systems broke down, all the meal ticket systems fell down. But everyone knew whether the other fellow was doing his part or whether he was sick and they just dumped the whole thing in the ash can and went to the table and ate dinner.²

Does Your Town

Supply you with work when you are out of a job?
Furnish you with free medical attendance?
Take any interest in your affairs at all?
Insure a living for your family?

Establish industries and develop resources?
Give you an interest in the affairs of the town?
Undertake to create an intelligent understanding of its problems?

MOVE To a Town That Does!



Preparedness? No. Just a Llano Drive Against Beer Rabbit.

LLANO offers you many advantages; It owns

Its brick yard, lime kiln and saw mill.
Its planing mill, cabinet shop, paint shop, rug works.
Its swimming pool and baths, its machine shop, blacksmith shop.
The laundry, printing plant, cannery, shoe shop.
Telephone line and hotel; tailor shop and art studio.

Its dairy and creamery; its bees, gardens, orchards.
Its rabbitries, poultry yards, alfalfa fields, hogs, and horses.
A stage line and tractors and trucks. Its fields and nursery.
Many other industries.

YOU are an equal owner in ALL of these things

This is the reason so many people come to Llano. It is the only city in the world that takes care of its citizens. It is the only city that provides for its aged without giving charity. It is the only city that offers equal opportunity and guarantees a living to all. It is the only city that is progressive in every direction. It offers you the things you are striving for, and it offers you independence. It offers freedom from worry, security and pleasant surroundings.

The World's Best Insurance Policy

is a membership in the Llano del Rio Community. There is nothing to equal it, nothing that even approaches it. Investigate it at once.

SEND FOR FREE ILLUSTRATED BOOKLET "THE GATEWAY TO FREEDOM"

ADDRESS:

Llano del Rio Company

Journal Building

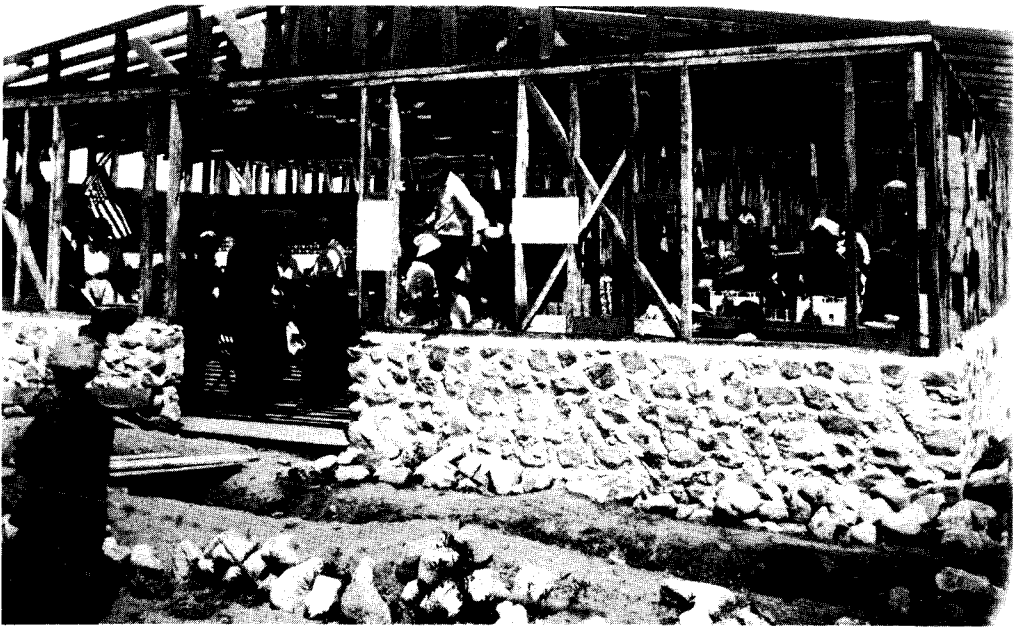
OF NEVADA

Reno, Nevada

*An exhortation from The Western Comrade,
August-September, 1916.*

*A socialistic paradox: a stock certificate
for shares in a cooperative community.
Sale of stock was rationalized under a
complex vision of socialistic economics.*





Never lacking for fieldstones, raked out of the desert when the land was cleared for planting, the colonists used them in building houses, fireplaces, walls, and irrigation ditches. Here, the workmen are constructing one of the larger buildings, probably the hotel. Llano's housing accommodations never did measure up to their proposed magnificence. The new residents were first quartered in tent-covered wooden platforms, then moved to adobe houses (which tended to melt in the rain), and finally to stone and wood buildings.

Grandiloquent plan for a central building which never got beyond the drawing board.



Llano opened on May Day, 1914, with five families, five pigs, a team of horses, and a cow. By early 1915 membership had grown to 150, and there were 100 cows and as many hogs. According to an early Llano colonist, Ernest Wooster, who at one time was business manager of Llano's magazine, *The Western Comrade*:

The problem of housing became so important that other work had to be dropped to care for this pressing necessity. . . . Incoming people were finally put into tents for the most part, and the canvas village of Llano covered a population of devoted idealists determined to demonstrate the success and practicability of their principles. A little later houses of adobe were built, the brick being moulded in hard moulds the usual size of commer-

Is Your Job Safe?

Hundreds are safeguarding themselves by joining the Llano del Rio Co-operative Colony in the Antelope Valley, Los Angeles County, California, where climate and surroundings are ideal for an agricultural and industrial community

This community is doing constructive and productive work in one of the most beautiful valleys in Southern California. The climate and surroundings are ideal. The Colony was founded and is conducted under the direct supervision of Job Harriman, who has been a leader in the Socialist movement in America for the past 25 years. The Colony is solving for its members and their families the serious problems of unemployment and insecurity for the future.

Here is an example of **COOPERATION IN ACTION.**

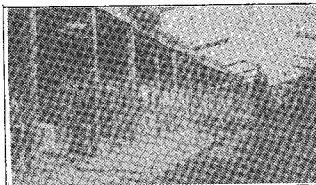
There were originally one thousand memberships. Six hundred of these are sold and the remainder are selling rapidly. Men and women of nearly every useful occupation are needed in the community. These men are following the latest scientific methods in farming, stock raising, dairying, poultry production, bee keeping, trout hatching

and rearing, and other agricultural and industrial pursuits. Social life is most delightful. If you are willing to apply the principles of co-operation of which you have heard, talked and read so much, here is your opportunity. Co-operation is a practical thing and

must be worked out in a practical manner. By this method we can accelerate the great world movement toward the socialization of all the sources of human life.

Do you want to solve your own

vexatious problems and assist in this great enterprise? We want Colonists and we want representatives who can speak and write the message of freedom. You can make good from this hour if you will take hold and secure members. You can make this organization work a permanent business. See the story of the Colony on page 15 of this magazine, take advantage of your opportunity and write for particulars.



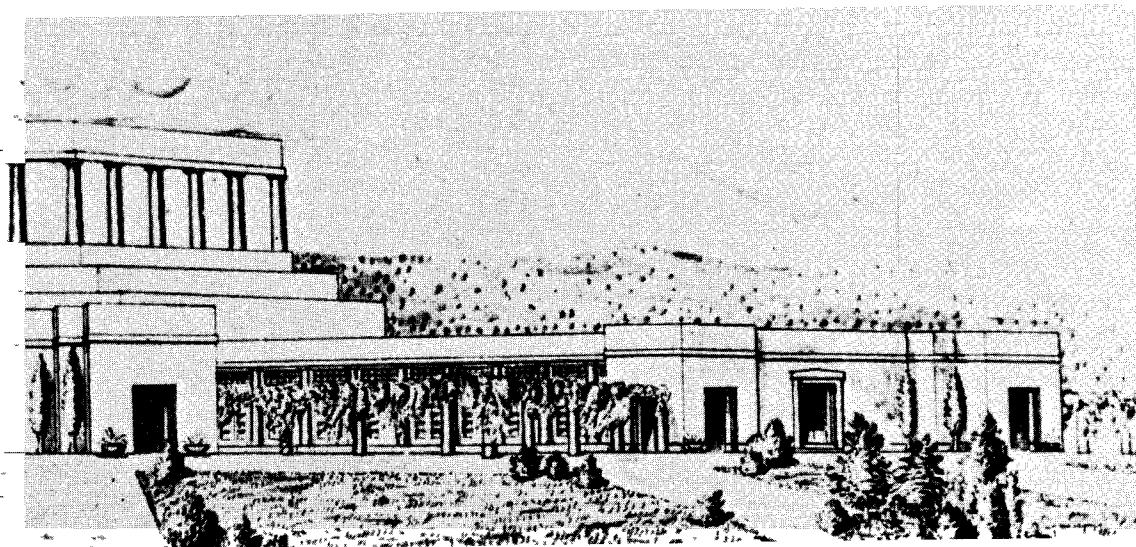
Address C. V. Eggleston, Fiscal Agent

Llano del Rio Company

924 Higgins Building

Los Angeles, California

A page from The Western Comrade, June, 1915.





Children were expected to help in sowing seeds for future crops. The colony's agricultural production was remarkably successful. During its first year, the colony produced seventy-five per cent of the food it consumed and by 1916 was producing about ninety per cent. Before the group disbanded, it had more than 2,000 acres planted to alfalfa, corn, truck crops, and pear trees. One of the most abundant crops was carrots — a vegetable that the colonists came to know altogether too well.



Girls prepare freshly harvested apples for canning, about 1916.

The bulging load of No. 10 cans on Llano's second truck attests to the volume of goods produced by the cannery.

cial brick, and laid in the ordinary way.³

Other buildings included a hotel, two barns, a concrete silo, a dairy, an office building, a cannery, and two industrial buildings. In addition, colonists laid miles of irrigation ditches, and planted 240 acres of alfalfa and 200 acres of orchards.

By 1917, according to Wooster,⁴ Llano industries included a print shop, shoe shop, laundry, cannery, clothes cleaning, warehouse, machine shop, blacksmith shop, rug making, planing mill, range stock, hog raising, dairy goats, soap making, lumbering, publishing newspaper and magazine, bakery, fish hatchery, transportation, barber shops, overalls and shirt making, paint shop, lime kiln, dairy, cabinet shop, nursery, alfalfa, orchards, poultry, gardens, rabbitry, and brick making. The colony at this time numbered over 1000. New arrivals brought needed cash, used to build roads, a quarry, houses, a hotel, and schools. But the new arrivals had to eat, too, and the colonists were troubled by poor and monotonous food—sometimes carrots were the only vegetable—and by inadequate shelter. The adobe

Llano Co-operators Do These Things:

Make soap, bread, butter, shirts, overalls, shoes, rugs, gloves, and vinegar.
Can fruit and vegetables.
Print a magazine, a newspaper and do job printing.
Wash clothes in their own steam laundry.
Raise garden truck, berries, and fruit.
Grow alfalfa and forage crops.
Operate auto truck transportation and stages.
Conduct two hotels.
Educate their children in their own Montessori and Industrial schools.
Store goods in their own warehouse.
Repair autos in their machine shop.
Educate their own stenographers.
Have an art studio.
Saw their own lumber.

Shoe horses.
Have a community barber shop.
Have their own doctors.
Give free medical attention.
Own pure bred and high grade hogs, fine cattle, range cattle, horses, tractors, automobiles, goats, chickens, rabbits, turkeys, bees.
Build houses for residents, and public buildings for the Colony.
Possess and control an irrigation system.
Have some fine young orchards, alfalfa fields, cattle ranges, etc.
They do these things for the good of all of the people in the Colony.
DO YOU KNOW OF ANOTHER SUCH TOWN?
Wouldn't you like to live where service, not profit, comes first?

Write for Literature

Llano del Rio Company

LLANO, CALIFORNIA



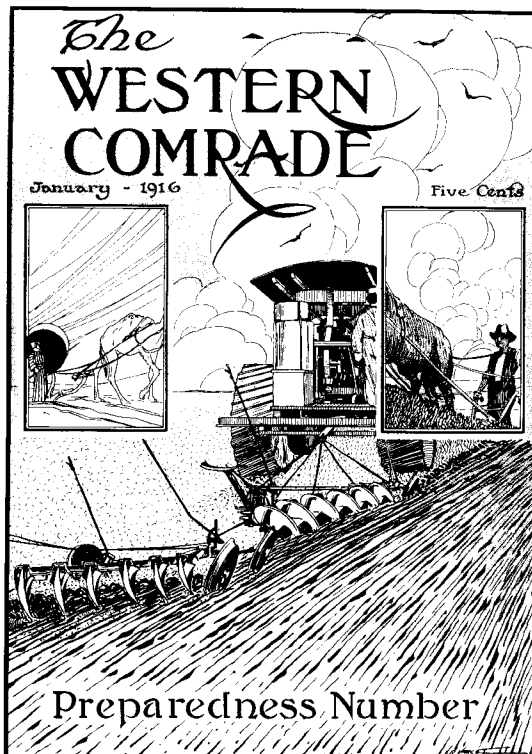
houses they built melted in the desert rain. A 12-year-old girl described one winter:

We had the awfulest rain and wind that I have ever seen. It blew the top of the hotel porch off and part of the dining room. It blew many of the tents down. . . . Our tent leaks awful.⁵

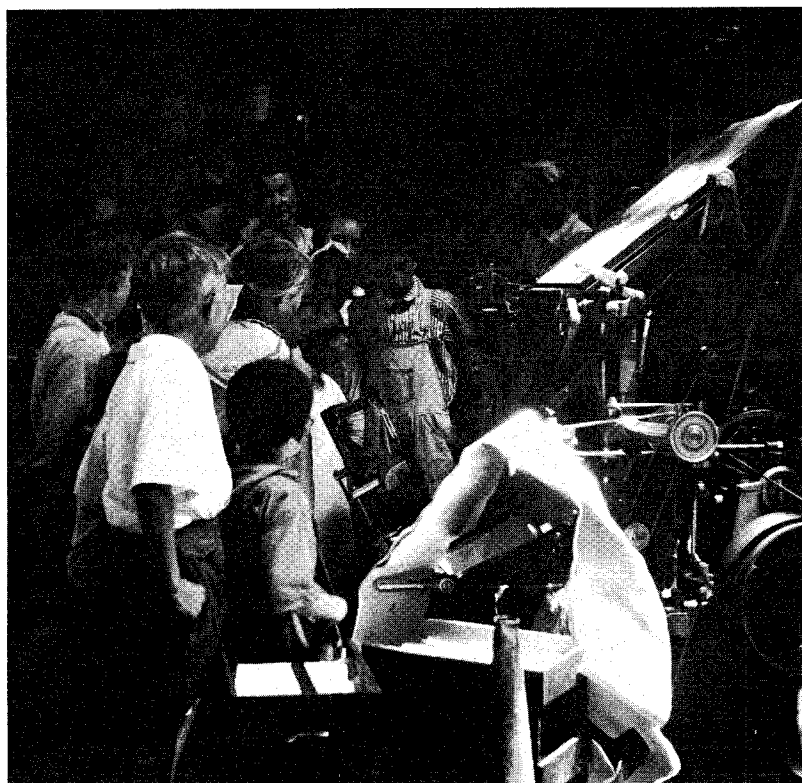
Perhaps in reaction to these conditions, colonists often wasted time and energy on get-rich-quick schemes. One man planned an airplane, which when perfected would be within the price range of most families. He built a model on an empty patch of Llano land, but when it was finished he was so afraid of testing it that he set it on fire instead, supposedly by accident.

Other colonists prospected for gold, while still others listened to a man who claimed to be a water witch. They dug a number of dry wells before they relinquished their belief in the willow wand. Another visionary promoted turnips as a cash crop but never planted any. There was a complainer named Gibbons who always groused about how things were run but was always too sick to do any work. Through subsequent years at Llano, slackers were called Gibbonites.

The colonists may have lived largely on carrots and dreams, but they often found ways to have a good time. Harriman emphasized "equal social opportunities," and colony dances, open to outside visitors, were held weekly. Harriman cherished and shared his plan for Llano as the city of the future, 10,000 strong,



Printing was a major endeavor at Llano throughout its history, partly because of the abundance of socialist rhetoric generated in the colony. Printer above right locks up galleys for proofing for a letterpress publication. The plant also had sheet-fed offset equipment. Students from the Llano school (right) learned to operate a linotype as part of their technical training. Quality standards for job printing were fairly high. Once in a while, the plant outdid itself by producing work such as the two-color line drawing reproduced on the magazine cover at the left.

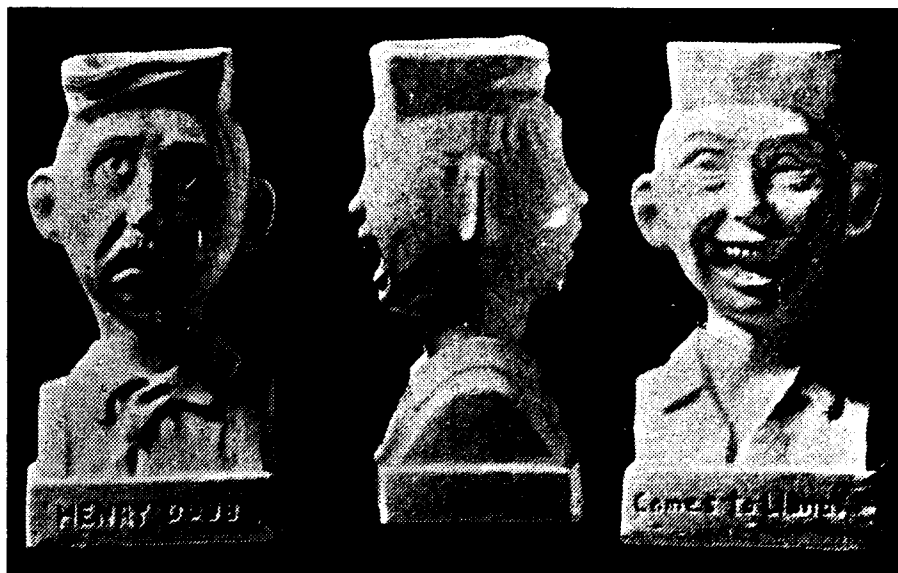




Collators assemble a publication in the print shop, which depended on women to process much of the handwork.

Pushing a theme with an uncomfortably modern connotation, the Llano colony advertised for families that were worrying even then about "street people." Note that by October of 1916, the colony felt sufficiently self-confident to proclaim itself "The World's greatest Co-operative Community."

Plaster-cast souvenir, of somewhat dubious aesthetic charms, depicts the joyful transformation of one Henry Dubb after he came to Llano.



This Goat Belongs to Llano Boys

They have a flock of goats, blooded Swiss milk stock. They have chickens, turkeys, rabbits, horses and pets. The boys are building a hen-house eighty feet long. They are building a club house one hundred and twelve feet long.

Does Your Boy Have this Chance? Or Is He Roaming the Streets in Bad Company?

WHAT sort of a future are you planning for your children? What are your girls learning? Is their environment good? Are they spending their time profitably? Are they following healthful pursuits?

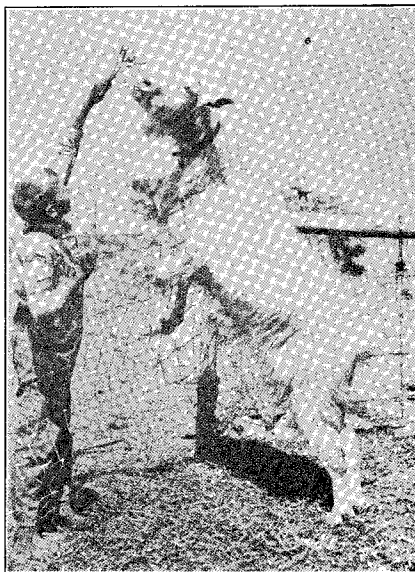
A membership for you will give them the opportunity they need. You can make them healthy, robust, happy. They will learn practicable things and develop as you would like to see them.

There is an opportunity for you and your family at Llano.

Its many developing industries offer your children the scope of opportunity that will permit them to select the occupation they prefer. They can make this selection by actual contact; each child gains a thorough understanding of the different lines of work.

And then above all is the freedom, the independence, the assurance of steady employment, the protection in old age. A membership in the Llano del Rio Colony is the only perfect insurance.

Write at once for "The Gateway to Freedom" and other descriptive literature



Llano Boys Have Their Own Livestock

Llano del Rio Colony

THE WORLD'S GREATEST CO-OPERATIVE COMMUNITY

Llano

Los Angeles County

California

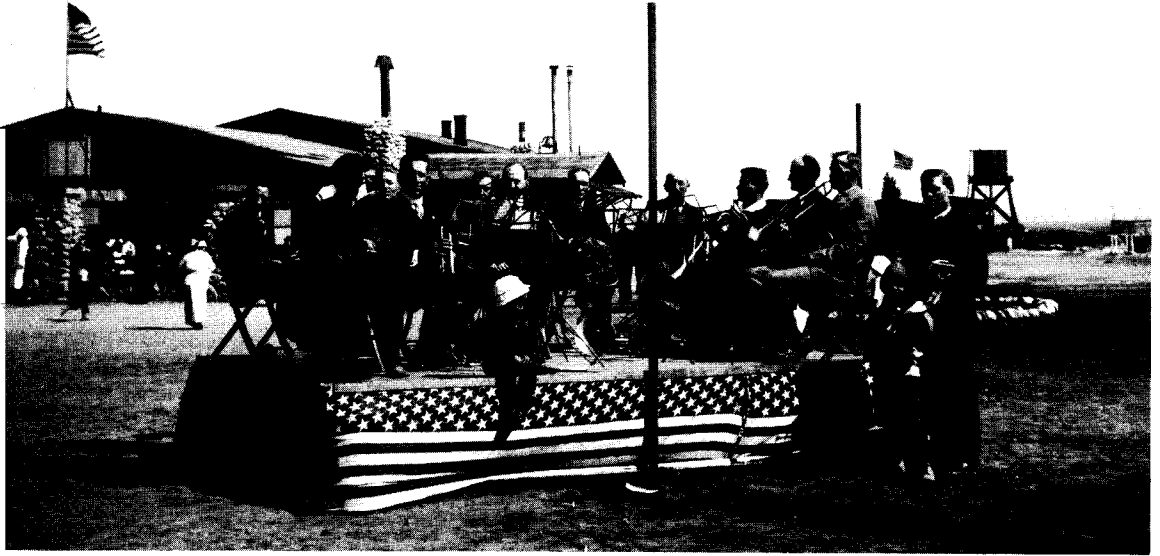
with five-room houses for every family. Pursuing this vision, Llanoites lost sight of more mundane problems, and were surprised when the California Commissioner of Corporations condemned the colony for polluting its water supply and profiteering at the co-operative store.

Following the Commissioner's investigation, Harriman was faced with mutiny, and retained control only through a legal maneuver—he established a new Llano del Rio Company in Nevada beyond the reach of the California authorities, and used its stock to buy all the California property. Llano remained a Nevada corporation. Harriman's leadership, however, was often threatened by rebellious colonists. Harriman founded his colony with the firm belief that "the hearts and minds of men would be as sweet and gentle and loving as in babyhood, if the

stream of life were not polluted by the vicious methods of the universal conflict of interests."⁶ The results of his experiment did not strengthen his belief. In 1924 he wrote:

Men and women would gather around the fire in the large hotel room of an evening and discuss the various phases of socialism as they had imagined them . . . And yet these very same people when in the shop or field would act as differently as they would have acted had they never heard of socialism.

Some were selfish, arrogant, and egotistical and shirked their duties, quit early, went to work late, rested often, talked much, criticized everything and every-



When they were not toiling in the fields or arguing socialist doctrine, the Llanoites enjoyed themselves in a relaxed round of dances and socials, climaxed with the annual celebration of May Day. With all the flags and bunting of a Fourth of July celebration, the colony produced a memorable festival in 1917, featuring sack races, parades, concerts and dramatics. The Llano band, (above), ensconced on a bunting-draped platform, played patriotic and revolutionary tunes.

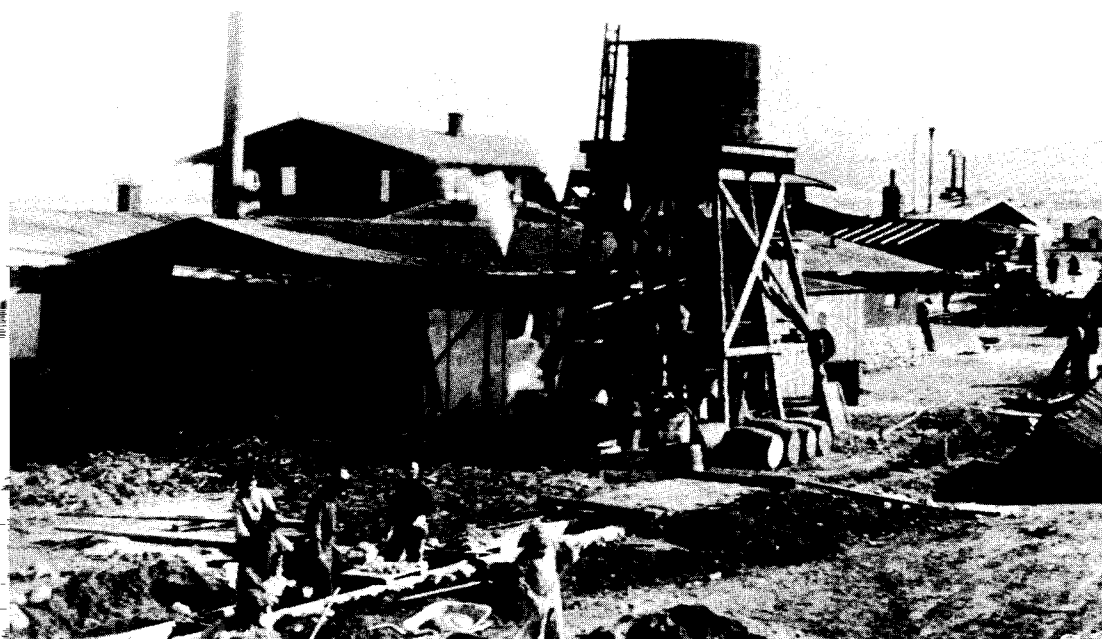
The choral society, costumed for the day, launches with gusto into a song. Favorite of the day: The Marseillaise.





After a barbecue supper, girls from the Llano school twirled around the May Pole. The evening was concluded by a performance by the dramatic club of "Mishaps of Minerva" followed by dancing in the assembly hall.





Jets of steam rise from standpipes at the soap factory and a worker slices a raw block of soap into laundry cakes. This was one of the few industries developed by the colony for its self-support. Unfortunately, the plant consumed an undue volume of water and contributed to the critical water shortage.



body, wanted the lion's share at the commissary, wanted the best houses, with extra furniture, neglected the animals, were careless with tools, and did everything that might be thought of by those who were seeking the advantage of those about them . . . The selfish persisted in their course with a persistence that was amazing.⁷

The colony directors once threatened to post the names of all those who failed to work as "parasites," but the selfish at Llano still persisted in their course, often exploiting their general assembly, intended as an expression of the freedom allowed the colonists:

It was Democracy rampant, belligerent, unrestricted; an inquisition, a mental pilory, a mad house of meddlesomeness and attempts at business, a jumble of passions and idealism—and all in deadly earnest. . . . It became a Frankenstein which threatened to destroy the colony. It was the fruit of the propaganda for democracy of the early soap-boxers, but these street-corner orators had utterly failed to define what democracy means. The General Assembly was democracy with the lid off.⁸

Factionalism became so extreme that one man complained that his adobe house was not completed although he had a sick child because he was not "standing with the right crowd."

One minority group within the colony began holding secret meetings in the sagebrush at night. They called themselves the Welfare League, and demanded an even more extreme form of democracy than the general assembly provided—a popular vote to be taken on every plan before it was put into effect. Wooster wrote:

The "democrats" were offered the alfalfa industry to be operated experimentally by them according to their democratic notions. If their plan proved to be all they claimed for it, other in-

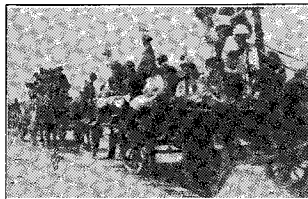
Wanted: 100 Men! Steady Employment for Life

A FEW months ago the advertisement in this space called for 1000 men. Nine hundred have responded. Not all of them have arrived at Llano, but there are several hundred there and all the absent members are eager to come and they are flocking there by the score every month. The remaining memberships are being rapidly subscribed and in a short time they will all be taken. Are you going to be among the fortunate thousand members and join the several thousands of comrades who are working out the

problem that has vexed humanity for ages? Are you not tired of the struggle under the murderous competitive system? Thousands are going down every month under foreclosures and other capitalist methods of expropriation. Are you not ready to join a group of workers and be one of the pioneers in working out this great problem that has confronted humanity throughout the ages.

The community is extending its holdings of land and water, live stock, farm implements and machinery. It grows in numbers and in financial strength. It grows in power because of solidarity and comradeship.

A complete new, modern sawmill plant has been added to the colony property. This comes in, as does our other machinery, free and clear of debt. Our greatest task now is to clear more and more land and get in crops.



Members of Llano Colony on an Outing

Only about 100 memberships remain. The initial fee will be raised to \$1000 in a few weeks. If you want to join this great cooperative community you will have to act promptly. Don't delay an hour. Send us information about yourself and ask for an application blank. Read the stories about the colony in this magazine. Prompt and decisive action at this hour may mean a turning point in your life that will lead to happiness and safety during your old age.

Promises of life-long employment, such as this advertisement in The Western Comrade (November 1915), attracted some colonists with more materialistic than idealistic goals, who were reluctant to work industriously and hampered the colony's productivity.

Ditch diggers pause in their labors to face the camera of Meyer Elkins, colony photographer, whose studio is visible at the left. Irrigation ditches were dug in anticipation of a dam on Big Rock Creek, which was never constructed.



• PLEASE NOTICE •

THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS REQUESTS EVERY MEMBER OF THE COLONY TO KEEP CHILDREN, STOCK AND DOGS AWAY FROM THE WATER DITCH, TYING THEM UP IF NECESSARY. AS THE COMMUNITIES HEALTH DEPENDS TO A GREAT EXTENT ON THE PURITY OF OUR DRINKING WATER, EVERY ONE SHOULD OBSERVE THIS PRECAUTION.

Secretary.

Water was scarce and polluted. Regulations were promulgated to force respect for this precious commodity, but with only moderate success. Shortage of water was one of the main reasons for closing down the colony.

LLANO DE RIO COLONY
LLANO, CALIFORNIA

Memo. for The Board of Commissioners

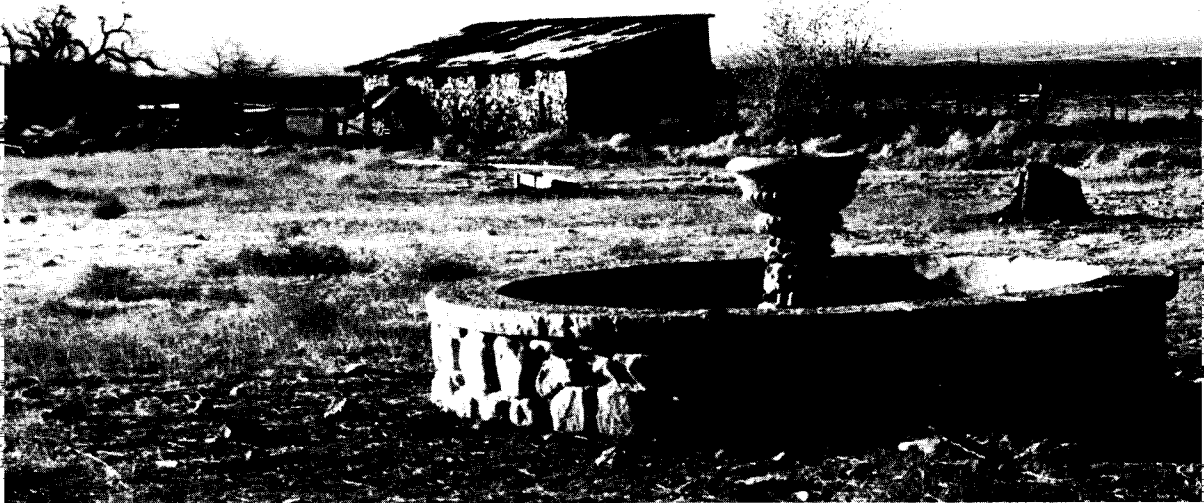
Dear Comrades,

If I have to save the geese out of the ditch, to have to build across fence a course the stock to some other locality - we can't kill them because they bring food that stuff would be no good. But if you want them killed I kill them.

If you build a new fence and back stock on some place you must absolutely see to it that there is water in ditch so they choke to death. Then geese and Ducks didn't have no water today.

Pete Schröder

Have been informed that the geese being a ditch of their own have not polluted the water ditch.



dustries were to be shifted one by one.⁹

The entire colony assembled to discuss the plan. Members of the Welfare League came in wearing sagebrush pinned to their clothing as a symbol of their organization, and rejected the plan. Harriman expelled their leaders from the colony and the insurrection ended, but "brush gang" remained in the language of Llano, referring to those "chronically and unreasonably disgruntled."¹⁰

An article in the Llano promotional magazine, *Western*

Comrade, attempted to discourage the arrival of more potential brush gangers:

Those who imagine, as some of our newcomers do, that a complete revolution of the methods of getting must immediately obtain upon their arrival here, are due for a shock. We are not attempting an Utopian phantasmagoria, but are constantly dealing with things of life, nature and harness and horses, plows, wood cutting and the building of homes.¹¹

Llano might have survived the quarrels among its members, but it was faced with a problem much more severe—the problem of how the colony's expanding membership could live off its barren land. Llano's irrigated acres simply could not support 1000 people, no matter how great their dedication and enthusiasm.

In the midst of its financial difficulties, Llano was betrayed by one of its own officers. Gentry Purviance McCorkle, secretary of the colony, "brought the hopes

Tired of the Struggle?

ARE you a victim of the "back to the land movement"? If so, on your arrival, didn't you find that you must sell at wholesale and buy at retail? Com-

pelled to submit to the other fellow's prices in both cases? Join the Llano Del Rio Co-operative Colony, where we buy at wholesale and will sell our surplus to the outside world at retail, through our own store.

Do you see your life savings being wiped out in the purchase of necessities because you can not use your time productively? Join our community where your job is your own and where you take your orders from a boss you and your comrades have selected.

Are you tired of creating by your labor orchards, houses, factories and machinery, only to see them owned and used by others to enslave those who do useful work? Join our Colony and help

create these things under collective ownership and democratic control.

Are you tired of a sixteen-hour day and isolation for yourself and family? Join our



ALBERT A. JAMES
Manager Membership Department

Colony and get an eight-hour day, and in our social life you will find congenial friends whose every desire is for your success.

Are you tired for the heartbreaking struggle to keep your children clothed and in school. Come to Llano where we consider our children our greatest asset and where our educators take the children at two years and carry them through from the Montessori (kindergarten) to the high school.

Are you tired of speculation, wherein the wealth of the workers passes as unearned increment into the coffers of those who speculate in land and tools of production? Join our Colony where no real estate is for sale and no "business opportunities" are available.

A plea for more members, published in The Western Comrade, August, 1915.

All that remains of the water system today is this dry fountain, baking in the desert sun. (Photograph by Paul Kagan)



Where the Sun will Set Forever Tonight on the Aban

2 SUNDAY MORNING.

DESERTED TOWN



End of the grand experiment: Colonists began to move out early in 1918. More than a hundred migrated to a new site in Louisiana. Left behind: scores of farm machines. The buildings were quickly sacked and stripped after the shutdown.



Wreckage of "Applied and Co-operative Socialism."

Los Angeles Sunday Times.

JULY 5, 1925.—[PART II-a]

GRAVEYARD OF ONE MORE UTOPIA

Jubilant Los Angeles Times reported closing of the colony. The paper had never quite forgotten Job Harriman's participation in the defense of the McNamara brothers who had confessed to the bombing of the Times plant in 1911.

HUMAN NATURE AND DESERT COMBINED TO SPOIL SCHEME FOR SOCIALISTIC COMMUNITY

of the California enterprise to an end. What would undoubtedly have developed into a substantial and valuable estate was made a failure because of the grasping short sightedness of one who considered his own interests first and did not hesitate to use the most unscrupulous means."¹² McCorkle told the story in his autobiography, "Wayside Memories of a Tennessee Rebel."¹³

During 1916 I began to see that the colony was slipping. . . . In order to protect my investment, I organized the Llano Investment Company. . . . I then transferred to this company various properties that had not been mortgaged and also the colony notes for money owed me. I did not issue all of the stock, just . . . 50% to myself.

McCorkle considered Llano a lost cause because of the conflict between colony members and the other citizens of the Big Rock Water District. Llano went to court over the right to irrigate its acres. The opposing attorney spoke of "Socialistic plunderers" and the case was lost. McCorkle believed the decision rendered the land valueless—"nothing but jack rabbits and stink weeds"—and he moved to protect himself. McCorkle's financial manipulations precipitated a plan





Moving of the colony to a 20,000-acre location in Louisiana was announced in the November 1917 issue of *The Western Comrade*. A new magazine, *The Llano Colonist*, appeared weekly in Louisiana until the colony's demise in the thirties.



In Louisiana, the colony acquired an abandoned mill town as a base, re-named it Newollano. This building was at first the general store.



Harriman had long considered moving Llano to a new location

In the summer of 1917 Harriman learned of 20,000 acres of land for sale by the Gulf Lumber Company in Louisiana. The land had been logged but it included a small town. The lumber company's price of \$125,000 payable over several years was accepted by the colony's directors in August. The original plan to maintain the orchards in California quickly faded, and all effort was poured into the new colony.

Harriman, sick with tuberculosis and disillusioned with Llano, returned to California where he died in 1925. George Pickett, who became manager of the colony in its new site near Stables, Louisiana, was a man fond of saying that he would "rather work with a bunch of morons than with a lot of over-educated kickers."¹⁴ He ruled Llano with considerable authority until 1938, when the colony collapsed financially.

By 1926, factions within the colony began to oppose Pickett's leadership. In 1927, the protestors filed suit against the Llano del Rio Company, charging that:

The colony had reduced workers to peons in behalf of the Gulf Lumber Company, and that the colonists were poorly fed, wretchedly clothed, and housed in typhus-infested mill huts. The colony schools, with their program of half-work, half-study, had prostituted small children to the nefarious purposes of Pickett, . . . colony leaders had 'advocated the social practice commonly known as "free love"'.¹⁵

The charges of immorality were blatantly untrue and easily disproved. Pickett made his opponents look foolish over this issue in the early stages of the case, and went on to win easily.

Llano limped along into the thirties, always in financial trouble, and often torn by power struggles. By 1936, the colony went bankrupt. This catastrophe brought the warring factions together in a genuine attempt at co-operation which lasted two years, but in 1938 Llano finally failed and its inhabitants dispersed.

Llano's three and a half year existence in California did more than lay the basis for a comparatively long-lived non-spiritual community in the United States. A profound dissatisfaction with the prevailing conditions of life was the original impetus of Llano. It was to be a constructive alternative to the woes and cares of life. But inside Llano the same problems—indolence, avarice, envy, lack of knowledge—appeared even more intensified than they had been "outside." What was missing that might have resulted in the continuation of Llano in spite of the factions and frictions? Was there a basic misunderstanding about man and his dependence on other men, society, and the environment?

Many Llanoites left the colony with a new and personal learning. Job Harriman, most of all, realized that fundamental human problems go deeper than their outward expression in social organization. And Llano continues to bear fruit today, as ex-Llanoites begin new social experiments in society, and bring more understanding to the lives of their own families. And finally Llano del Rio stands as an historical example, a compendium of data about communal living, for all those who are concerned today with the questions of community.

SOURCES

1. From a taped interview with Walter Millsap, a long time member of the colony. The interview was conducted by Art Wadsworth on May 8, 1964, for the Pacifica Foundation (a non-profit foundation that owns listener-supported radio stations). A transcript of the interview and copy of the tape are in the possession of the author.
2. *Ibid.*
3. Ernest S. Wooster, "They Shared Equally," *Sunset*, July 1924, p. 23.
4. ———, "Bread and Hyacinths," *Sunset*, August 1924, p. 21.
5. Mellie M. Calvert, *The Llano Del Rio Co-operative Colony*, Unpublished, Huntington Library manuscript, from the Llano del Rio Colony collection which was given to the Huntington by Mellie Calvert in 1969. Uncatalogued, written after 1962 and before 1969.
6. Job Harriman, "Llano-Community of Ideals," *Western Comrade* IV, March 1917, p. 9 *The Western Comrade* began publication in Los Angeles in April, 1913, edited by Stanley B. Wilson and Chester M. Wright. In July 1914, Franklin E. Wolfe became its editor and Job Harriman its managing editor. After Wolfe joined the Llano colony in June, 1916, the journal was published at the colony. It moved to Newllano, Louisiana, in November 1917, where it was published until the March-April issue of 1918. It was then renamed the *Internationalist*, published for two more issues, and allowed to expire.
7. Ernest S. Wooster, *Communities Past and Present*, Newllano, La., 1924. From Introduction.
8. ———, "They Shared Equality," *Sunset*, July 1924, p. 81.
9. ———, "Bread and Hyacinths," *Sunset*, August 1924, p. 23.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 59.
11. *Western Comrade*, June 1916, p. 11.
12. Ernest S. Wooster, *Communities Past and Present*, "Llano Co-operative Colony," p. 127.
13. G. P. McCorkle, "Wayside Memories of a Tennessee Rebel," Unpublished Huntington Library manuscript (autobiographical memoir by a former Secretary-Treasurer of the colony in California), undated. From the Llano del Rio colony collection given to the Huntington by Mellie Calvert in 1969.
14. Robert Carlton Brown, *Can We Co-operate?*, Pleasant Plains, New York: Roving Eye Press, 1940. pp. 132-133.
15. Paul K. Conkin, *Two Paths to Utopia*, Lincoln, Nebraska: The University of Nebraska Press, 1964. p. 137.

PICTURE SOURCES: Many of the original Llano photographs were taken by Walter Millsap and Meyer Elkins. Elkins ran the Llano Studio at the colony. Mrs. Mellie Calvert, Mrs. Jean Nourse, Mr. Bernie Stevens, and Mrs. Sarah Shuldiner have been gracious and helpful in locating and providing pictorial materials about Llano. The photograph of Job Harriman on page 132 and the two notices on page 148 are reproduced courtesy of the Huntington Library. All of the pictorial materials on pages 150 and 151 are courtesy of *The Los Angeles Times*. The cover of the *Llano Colonist* on page 152 is reproduced courtesy of the Bancroft Library.

Charles Wollenberg

*Instructor of History and Political
Science at Laney College, Oakland;
co-editor of the recent CHS publica-
tion, Neither Separate Nor Equal:
Race and Racism in California;
honorable mention winner of the 1971
California History Prize with the
following essay.*

Race and Class in Rural California: The El Monte Berry Strike of 1933

AT THE END of May 1933 "outside agitators" appeared in the San Gabriel Valley, 30 miles east of Los Angeles. They were avowed radicals, organizers for the Cannery and Agricultural Workers Industrial Union (CAWIU), an affiliate of the Communist Party. They came to organize a strike of the San Gabriel Valley's Mexican berry pickers, and on June 1, they called a mass meeting at Hicks Camp, an agricultural labor settlement on the outskirts of El Monte. The meeting was a success: more than 500 workers attended and demanded wages that would guarantee a minimum of 25 cents per hour. Under the guidance of CAWIU personnel, a Committee of Action was formed and demands were delivered to the bosses, Japanese growers who operated several dozen berry farms in the vicinity of El Monte. When the demands were not met, the Committee proclaimed a strike and established picket lines in berry fields throughout the San Gabriel Valley. By June 5 more than 800 workers were off the job and the Valley's berry harvest was in jeopardy.

The El Monte berry strike and the larger conflicts that grew from it are part of a long heritage of struggle in California fields. Since the entrance of Chinese workers into the farm labor market in the 1870's, California growers have had access to laborers who have been the victims of racial prejudice and who have been willing or forced to accept wages lower than those in the state's other major economic sectors. Even the Depression migration of "Okies" and "Arkies" did not alter this fact, for the Dust Bowl migrants worked alongside Mexican, Japanese, and Filipinos throughout the thirties. Indeed, the Okies themselves became something of a "minority group," despite their white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant origin. They found themselves in an economic and social position normally held by non-whites in California society, and thus it was not surprising that they suffered the kind of discrimination and exploitation usually experienced by minority groups.

This simply illustrates the interrelationship of race and class in the history

of rural California. The lowest-paid farm workers often have been non-white, and they have a long, though by no means successful, tradition of collective action to improve their economic and social condition. Seen in this light, the Delano movement of the 1960's and 1970's is only the latest chapter in a very long story, and Cesar Chávez and his followers are challenging economic and social patterns that are more than a century old. The El Monte berry strike is another chapter in this story of conflict and struggle, certainly lesser known than the events of Delano, but nonetheless important. The El Monte strike grew into one of the largest farm labor disputes of the 1930's and it pitted Japanese growers against Mexican workers in a rivalry between two of the most important non-white groups in the history of California's agricultural development.

Both Mexicans and Japanese originally came to rural California in the late nineteenth century as unskilled farm workers. In 1903 their interests were similar enough for workers of both nationalities to cooperate in joint walk-outs in Ventura County, but already by that time, increasing numbers of Japanese were becoming farm operators rather than farm laborers. By 1910 Japanese growers occupied more than 170,000 acres of California cropland, most of it leased or sharecropped. Japanese wage workers continued to be an important part of the farm labor market for another decade, but after 1910 the number of such workers declined while the number of Japanese farm operators increased.

This shift in economic and social status fanned the flames of the "Yellow Peril." The Japanese inherited much of the anti-Orientalism long directed against Chinese in California, but unlike the Chinese, Japanese not only competed against white workers for jobs but also against white growers for markets. Japan was an expanding world power, and many Californians were convinced that Japanese assertiveness in the Far East was related to the growing number of Japanese farms on the west coast of the United States. There was, they claimed, an inscrutable Oriental conspiracy to wipe out Western Civilization in the Pacific Basin.

In 1913 the California Legislature struck back. An Alien Land Law was passed which prohibited those aliens defined by the Courts as ineligible for citizenship from owning agricultural land in California and greatly restricted their right to lease such properties. In 1921 the voters of the state broadened the 1913 legislation through the initiative process; leasing and sharecropping now were completely banned, and the prohibition against ownership was strengthened. Since Japanese were the only aliens declared ineligible for citizenship who operated large numbers of California farms, the intent of the Alien Land Law is obvious: to force Japanese growers out of business. But the laws could easily be subverted: sharecroppers could call themselves "foremen" and leases or deeds could be filed in the names of dummy corporations or of second-generation Nisei who, as American-born citizens, were unaffected by the legislation. By 1930 the number of Japanese-operated

farms was more than 5000, and although Congress banned further Japanese immigration in 1924, California's Japanese and Japanese-American population in 1930 totalled nearly 100,000, more than double the 1900 figure.

Meanwhile, Mexicans had replaced Japanese as the main ethnic component of California's unskilled farm labor force. Although the state's Mexican population grew during the first decade of the twentieth century, massive Mexican immigration to California did not become a demographic fact of life until after 1900. In part, Mexican immigration filled a vacuum created by the shift of Japanese out of farm labor. It also took up the slack created by laws passed during the 1920's which restricted European immigration and banned immigration from Asia (except U. S. territories). America's entrance into World War I drained domestic manpower and created a severe labor shortage in California fields. At the same time, the Mexican Revolution brought economic chaos, physical destruction and new social geographic mobility to much of Mexico. Mexican immigration to the United States was limited only by vague "qualitative restrictions" established by U. S. laws, and by a greatly under-manned American-Mexican border patrol. Thus, conditions on both sides of the border conspired to produce a great movement of people "north from Mexico." In 1930 the Census found 370,000 Mexicans in California, more than double the 1920 figure. By 1930 Mexican labor was a major part of the agricultural work force in most areas of the state and dominated the harvests of the San Joaquin and Imperial Valleys and the rich truck farming region surrounding Los Angeles.

The Depression brought suffering to most people in rural California, Japanese and Mexicans included, but it also may have brought new opportunity to obtain land for some Japanese farmers. Prices of agricultural property dropped, and increasing numbers of hard-pressed land owners may have been willing to lease or sell to Japanese, Alien Land Laws notwithstanding. Although we have no precise figures, the number of Japanese farms in California seems to have grown substantially during the thirties. By the time of the Japanese relocation in 1942, such farms produced by value 30 to 35 percent of all commercial truck crops in the state. In the Los Angeles area, Japanese farmers held monopolies on the production of many varieties of vegetables and fruits, including San Gabriel Valley berries, and Japanese merchants in Los Angeles proper controlled much of the wholesale and retail distribution of such products.

If the Depression brought profitable opportunities to at least some Japanese in rural California, it brought economic disaster to most Mexicans. Agricultural wages dropped even more rapidly than prices, as the farm labor market was glutted by Dust Bowl migrants. In 1933, the State Relief Agency reported that 185 farm workers were available for every 100 farm labor jobs in California. Faced with growing poverty and unemployment, thousands of Mexicans formerly residing in California returned to Mexico. Most left the state voluntarily, but some were victims of not-so-voluntary "repatria-

tion programs" sponsored by Los Angeles County in an effort to reduce relief rolls. The Census shows practically no change in California's Mexican population between 1930 and 1940; evidently, the out-flow was matched by in-migration and the growth of a new generation of young Mexican Americans. But the thirties are the only decade in this century in which the Census did not register a substantial growth in California's Mexican or Spanish surname population.

Depression conditions at Hicks Camp, the San Gabriel Valley's largest farm labor settlement, probably were typical for Mexican farm workers throughout the Los Angeles region. Most Hicks Camp residents were migrants; thus, the population fluctuated according to season. It reached its height during the berry harvests from late May to late July, when more than 1500 people crowded into the settlement's dusty shacks and shanties. The workers were paid according to uniform piece-rates established by the Japanese employers through their berry grower's association. Rates differed for each of several varieties of berries grown in the Valley, and each berry's separate harvest had its high and low points. Thus, it is difficult to estimate the average wage of a berry picker during the 1933 harvest, since an individual's income could vary greatly on a week-to-week or even day-to-day basis. The Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce, in a report sympathetic to the Japanese grower's cause, claimed that the "average skilled worker" earned between 20 and 25 cents an hour, while spokesman for the striking Mexican workers put the average at 15 cents with earnings as low as 9 cents not uncommon. Dr. Charles Spaulding, a sociologist who studied Hicks Camp shortly after the strike, probably summed up the situation accurately when he said that "everyone who was in a position to form an unbiased opinion agreed that they [the wages] were too low."

Perhaps for this reason, the CAWIU organizers were remarkably successful in stimulating strike action among the berry pickers. Not only did the walkouts quickly spread throughout the San Gabriel Valley, but during the first week of June, work-stoppages also occurred on Japanese-operated vegetable farms near the beach towns of Venice, Santa Monica, and San Pedro. The CAWIU men had encouraged Hicks Camp workers to appeal for support from Mexicans throughout the Los Angeles region. Meetings were held in many *barrios*, and residents not only responded with moral and material support for the San Gabriel Valley strike, but also with strike action of their own. On June 7 the Los Angeles Spanish-language daily, *La Opinion*, reported that 2000 Mexican farm workers were striking against Japanese employers throughout the Los Angeles area. Within a week, *La Opinion* had raised the figure to 7000 and was treating the combined walkouts as a general strike of Mexican workers against Japanese growers.

This great expansion of strike activity quickly brought the dispute to the attention of established leaders of Los Angeles' Mexican community. By June 10 a *Comite Pro-Huelga* (Pro-strike committee) had formed to coor-

dinate and support the region's many strikes of Mexican farm workers. Comitè membership included representatives of Mexican mutual aid and fraternal organizations and some representatives of the striking workers. Chief spokesman for the Comitè was Armando Flores, a Los Angeles printer who had been involved in an ambitious but ultimately unsuccessful attempt to organize a union of Southern California farm workers in 1928. Flores and his fellow Comitè members had close ties with the Mexican Consulate in Los Angeles and eventually Consul A. V. Martínez consented to serve as the group's Treasurer.

Establishment of the Comitè may have been indirectly due to the organizing skill of the CAWIU, but the Comitè also provided an alternative to CAWIU leadership at Hicks Camp. Probably no more than a dozen union organizers were present at the camp, and there is no indication that many of them spoke Spanish. Yet they attempted to maintain complete control of the strike organization. According to the Communist Party organ, *The Western World*, "with the setting up of the Committee [of Action] there were no further attempts taken to involve the workers into actual leadership." Although the *World* claimed that the CAWIU had great support among young people in Hicks Camp (Mexican youths were described serenading their elders with spirited renditions of "Lenin's Red Front March" and "Solidarity Forever"), resentment toward "outsiders" and "radicals" also grew among the strikers. On June 10 Armando Flores and Vice Consul Ricardo Hill addressed a mass meeting at Hicks Camp urging workers to reject the leadership of "red agitators." According to *La Opinion*, the strikers decided "the agitators must go at once," and after some internal struggle during the weekend of June 11 and 12, leaders willing to cooperate with the Comitè and the Consulate gained control of the strike organization.

The Western World had harsh words for the new order at Hicks Camp: Armando Flores was described as "boss controlled" and Ricardo Hill was a "strike breaker." But the change in command brought no visible reduction in militancy. Flores and Hill urged workers to continue staying out of the fields and manning the picket lines. The Comitè issued an "ultimatum" to Japanese growers throughout the region demanding a 25 cent hourly wage, re-hiring of strikers and union recognition for the Comitè. When the growers associations offered a 20 cent wage and no recognition, the Comitè asked Mexicans in Southern California to boycott goods imported from Japan.

The strike now clearly became an ethnic as well as economic conflict. The CAWIU and *The Western World* had defined the dispute simply as a struggle between workers and bosses, but now the Comitè emphasized the fact that these were *Mexican* workers and *Japanese* bosses. Emotional appeals for support were made to residents of the *Barrios*, and the response was impressive. *La Opinion* devoted daily columns to reports of donations to the strike fund; many people gave a few cents, some a few dollars and others contributed large stocks of food and supplies.

Appeals for support also were made to Mexico itself. Vice Consul Hill had promised workers official backing from the Mexican government, and by the middle of June, that promise had been kept. President Abelardo Rodríguez sent a personal contribution and ordered the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to forward additional funds to help feed and clothe the strikers. The *Confederación Regional de Obreros Mexicanos*, Mexico's semi-official labor federation, urged the California workers "to hold out until the end" and proclaimed a boycott on Japanese imported goods in Mexico. Perhaps fearing government displeasure, Japanese immigrants in Baja California also issued a statement supporting the cause of the strikers. Most important of all, the California strike received the blessing of the most powerful man in Mexico, ex-President General Plutarco Elias Calles. Calles sent a personal contribution to the strike fund and wired California Governor James Rolph to provide "protection and justice for my brothers." In early July, the General received Armando Flores and other Comite representatives at the Calles estate near Tijuana. Meanwhile, *La Opinion* had proclaimed Calles "the father of the pickers strike."

While the strikers received extraordinary support from official sources in Mexico, the growers received virtually no overt aid from the Japanese government. Toshito Satow, Japanese Consul in Los Angeles, declined to intervene in the dispute and only advised the growers to obey American law. Eventually, Satow did participate in some of the discussions which led to settlement of the strike, but he stressed that this participation was "as an individual" not as a representative of the Japanese government.

According to Charles Spaulding, the strike initially left the growers "bewildered, confused, and hesitant to act." But recovery was rapid, and the Japanese community of Southern California responded effectively to the emergency. Chief spokesman for the employers was Takashi Fukami, Executive Secretary of several Japanese growers associations in the Los Angeles area. Fukami claimed that his clients were eager for a fair settlement and pointed to the 20 cent compromise offer as evidence of that fact. He assured the public that a higher wage would bankrupt the growers and strongly criticized the Comite for misrepresenting the economic realities of the situation. Fukami was a man of dramatic pronouncements and he vowed that growers "would let the berries rot on the vine" before giving into "unreasonable wage demands."

Of course the growers were not about to let their berries rot on the vine. Nisei youths asked authorities to excuse them from school so that they could aid their parents in the harvest. This request was strongly backed by the El Monte chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League, and on June 7 and 8 school officials assented. Meanwhile, growers appealed for aid from family and friends in Japanese communities throughout the Los Angeles area. The response was great, but even the additional manpower supplied from these sources was not enough to complete the harvest. On June 29

Fukami announced that there were still berries on the vines, and he invited the public into the fields to help themselves at bargain prices. Hundreds of families took advantage of the offer during the weekend of June 30-31. The result not only was the harvesting of many berries but also popular support for the grower's cause.

This support was important, for attitude and actions of San Gabriel whites were to have a significant effect on the outcome of the berry strike. There is no evidence that many, if any, white growers were directly affected by the walkouts; however, whites owned most of the land occupied by the Japanese berry farms. These white landowners had an obvious stake in the continued prosperity of their tenants' farms, and they had little enthusiasm for a labor dispute which might focus public attention on profitable leasing arrangements which probably violated the Alien Land Laws. Many white growers also feared that a successful strike on Japanese farms inevitably would lead to walkouts in their own fields.

These concerns were strongly stated in communications from the El Monte Chamber of Commerce to its parent body, the Los Angeles County Chamber of Commerce. The El Monte group asked the County Chamber to use its influence to bring peace to the San Gabriel Valley, and thus the matter came to the attention of Dr. Frank Clements, Manager of the Los Angeles Chamber's Agricultural Department. Convinced that unorganized Mexican labor was essential to California's agricultural well-being, Clements had a strong aversion to both unionization of farm labor and restriction of Mexican immigration. His great fear was that the El Monte dispute would grow to such proportions that either or both of these evils might result: a successful Mexican labor union might be formed and/or the public might demand exclusion of "radical and troublesome" Mexicans. As Mr. Gast, Clements' staffman in El Monte, stated, "our particular interest is, of course, maintaining the integrity of our Mexican labor supply."

On the whole, Gast's report on the El Monte dispute favored the cause of the Japanese growers. He admitted that wages were too low, but he believed the grower's compromise offer was fair. Gast condemned the *Comite* for its "unreasonable" attitude and dismissed Armando Flores as "a communist of the worst type" (a somewhat ironic comment, given *The Western World's* bitter attacks against Flores). Gast also was suspicious of the motives of General Calles and the Mexican government who, he speculated, supported the California strike as a plainless way of winning popularity at home. Gast felt that there was need for a County Anti-Picketing Ordinance, since "the removal of open picketing" would end the walkouts.

By the end of June, not only the Chamber, but also the State Bureau of Industrial Relations and the Federal Department of Labor were involved in efforts to end the strike. Finally, after repeated failures, a settlement was reached on July 6. Terms included a \$1.50 minimum daily wage for "permanent" employees, defined as workers guaranteed at least six consecutive

days of employment for the same employer, and 20 cents per hour for other, "temporary," employees. Strikers were to be hired "as rapidly as circumstances permit," and reprisals against striking workers were prohibited. Flores and other representatives of the *Comite* signed in the name of a new organization, *La Union de Campesinos y Obreros Mexicanos* (Union of Mexican Workers and Peasants) which was recognized as bargaining agent for the pickers. The agreement appeared to cover both the berry fields and the coastal vegetable farms and was to remain binding until August 16, by which time harvests affected by the strike would be ended.

La Opinion hailed the July 6 agreement as a "triumph for the workers." The *Comite* issued victory statements and graciously expressed appreciation for support to the Mexican community of Southern California, the Consulate, President Rodríguez and, of course, "the father of the pickers' strike," General Calles. But there was little euphoria in Hicks Camp, for it soon became obvious that the agreement was being ignored in the San Gabriel Valley. On July 10, Thomas Barker, who had represented the Bureau of Industrial Relations in the strike negotiations, belatedly announced that the July 6 agreement applied only to the vegetable fields of the coastal towns and not to the berry farms of the Valley. Barker admitted that there had been a "verbal accord" regarding the San Gabriel workers, but this, he claimed, did not constitute a "binding agreement." *Comite* spokesmen protested Barker's interpretation, and Hicks Camp workers demanded immediate re-hiring and wages equal to those of the coastal vegetable pickers. But the berry harvests were coming to an end, and Japanese growers refused to replace trusted friends and relatives with strikers.

In the middle of July, Dr. Clements' staff again surveyed conditions at Hicks Camp. They found at least 500 residents without visible means of support, and the number was growing steadily as the harvests ended. Many workers had earned no money at all during the harvest season, and the food and other supplies provided by the *Comite* had long since run out. By the end of the month, *La Opinion* could report that "thousands of Mexicans [in the San Gabriel Valley], veterans of the last strike, are without work." Only a few of the strikers have been re-hired and the rest "live only by a miracle."

Thus the El Monte berry strike brought little tangible benefit to Hicks Camp workers. If anything, they were better off before the conflict began in early June than they were when it ended in July. Nevertheless, the strike did affect farm labor relations in California. Certainly, it increased militancy and social consciousness among Mexican agricultural workers in the Los Angeles area. By July an official of the Department of Labor was describing such workers as "union mad," while Dr. Spaulding found Hicks Camp veterans ready and willing to strike again. Dr. Clements decided that Los Angeles County had better provide emergency relief for Hicks Camp, since a "full-bellied Mexican rarely fights and is more tractable." One of the San

Gabriel Valley workers announced "if there is no strike in the San Joaquin Valley now, there will be one when we get there." There were, indeed, strikes of Mexican workers in the San Joaquin Valley later that summer, and there is little doubt that some of the Hicks Camp veterans participated in them.

The Japanese growers may have "won" the El Monte strike, but their "victory" was not particularly satisfying. The strike demonstrated the ultimate power of white institutions over Japanese interests in rural California. The victory of the berry growers in large part was due to the support of the El Monte Chamber of Commerce and the sympathetic attitude of the State Bureau of Industrial Relations. The strike focused attention on the tenuous relationship between key elements of the white community and the Japanese growers, relationships between landlords and tenants, between law enforcement officials and farmers willing to ignore or violate the Alien Land Laws. While Takashi Fukami claimed that the berry farmers suffered little economic loss due to the dispute, he was concerned about the long-term repercussions the strike might have on Japanese-white relations in Southern California.

White growers' reaction to the El Monte strike can be understood only within the total context of California farm labor relations during 1933. The El Monte strike was but one of 30 major labor conflicts and scores of minor disputes that hit California agriculture during that year, making 1933 the most disruptive twelve months in the history of the state's farm labor relations. Fifty-thousand workers participated in the 1933 strikes and CAWIU organizers were present at most of the major conflicts. By the end of the year, the state's most powerful agricultural interests were ready to mount a counter-attack, and this got under way with the formation of the Associated Farmers Inc. in early 1934. Associated Farmers was given strong financial support by growers, and it used its resources to maintain "black lists" of union members, publish anti-union propaganda, pressure law enforcement officials and courts to crack down on farm labor organizing and occasionally aid violent vigilante action to break strikes. By the end of 1934, the CAWIU was shattered, many of its leaders and organizers jailed and farm union activity in general had received a severe setback.

But neither race nor class conflict disappeared from California fields. Wartime "relocation" finally accomplished the ultimate aim of the "Yellow Peril" advocates: the removal of Japanese from California. Although most Japanese families returned to the state after the war, and some eventually re-established farms, it is unlikely that Japanese growers will ever be able to recover the great stake they once had in California agriculture. However, in 1971 the Nisei Farmers League was established in Fresno County to resist attempts by Cesar Chavez's United Farm Workers Union to organize laborers on Japanese-American-owned farms.

World War II also solved the unemployment problems of most "Okies" and "Arkies," who probably found jobs in urban defense industry or joined the armed services. By 1942 California farmers were complaining of severe labor shortages, and in that year the Federal government came to the rescue with the Bracero Program, a bilateral arrangement between the United States and Mexico allowing thousands of Mexican nationals to cross the border each year for temporary agricultural work. This wartime "emergency" measure lasted for twenty-two years and was supplemented by large-scale illegal immigration across the border. However, in the middle 1950's energetic measures were begun to cut the flow of illegal immigrants and in 1964 the Bracero Program itself was terminated. Thus by 1965 resident California farm workers had a better bargaining position than at any time in the previous thirty-five years, and some of these workers, primarily people of Mexican and Filipino descent, began walkouts in the grapefields of the Southern San Joaquin Valley. Once again the volatile mixture of race and class in rural California had brought conflict to the fields.

SOURCES

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Geoffrey P. Mawn

Student winner of the 1971 California History Prize offered by the California Historical Quarterly; recipient of an M.A. degree from the University of San Francisco; this winning essay on urban history is an extension of his thesis on Jasper O'Farrell.

Framework for Destiny: San Francisco, 1847

“THE PENINSULA, as you looked westward, presented the appearance of a lump of baker’s dough which had been kneaded into fantastic hills and valleys . . . [and] which, after having been worked, had been forgotten so long that the green mould had begun to creep over it.”¹ Yerba Buena by 1846 was a small pueblo with a cove and anchorage surrounded by a wilderness of rolling hills and sand dunes covered by clumps of dense, wind-flattened chaparral and scrub oak which provided shelter for a variety of animals and fowl. Twenty or thirty straggling houses plus numerous shanties and tents were scattered on the broad, grassy plateau which sloped gently from the edge of the bush to the waters of the Bay. Despite its location, Yerba Buena’s first decade of settlement was one of listless development, marred by the lack of a real pattern for its expansion.²

During the military occupation of California by United States forces, Captain John B. Montgomery appointed Lieutenant Washington A. Bartlett as Alcalde of the San Francisco District on August 26, 1846. With his headquarters in Yerba Buena, Bartlett assumed leadership of a town with a population exceeding two hundred persons where approximately fifty buildings and occasional brush fences vaguely outlined unnamed streets and where public improvements had been neglected for over a decade.³ Yerba Buena was, nevertheless, a town with a future.

The small population influx which followed the American occupation of Yerba Buena highlighted the need for the orderly growth of the town to meet the increased demand for private ownership of property. In September, 1846, William A. Leidesdorff and other prominent citizens of Yerba Buena tried to persuade Captain Montgomery to authorize Alcalde Bartlett to grant lots as Alcaldes had done under the Mexican Government. Bartlett hesitated to do so, believing that he did not have the necessary authority. In order to determine the extent of the powers of the Alcalde, Captain Montgomery sent Charles E. Pickett to obtain information from the former Mexican Alcaldes José de Jesús Noe, Francisco Guerrero, Francisco Sánchez, and José de la Cruz Sánchez. All these ex-Alcaldes of Yerba Buena confirmed



Pre-Gold Rush San Francisco was little more than a hamlet when Jasper O'Farrell surveyed the settlement in 1847.

the fact that the Alcalde was the legal trustee of all the public property and duty bound to grant lands to heads of families who solicited them and who paid the necessary fees.⁴ With this assurance of his power and with the obvious need for a surveyed plan, Bartlett sent the following request to Jasper O'Farrell:⁵

Magistracy of San Francisco
Yerba Buena Nov. 26th. 1846.

Jasper O'Farrell Esqr.
Dear Sir:

I have the utmost desire to have the town surveyed at the earliest possible day—therefore I shall expect you at your earliest convenience as every day will make it more difficult to get matters arranged as I wish them regarding the streets and lots.

All seem anxious to have a good plan of the town and I do not think I involve any risk of objection from any quarter. Therefore I decree it shall be done.

Yrs. very Truly
Wash'n A. Bartlett [rubric]
Magistrate.⁶

No record survives of Jasper O'Farrell's response, but he undoubtedly showed his interest in the work and proposed his terms. In order to confer personally with the Alcalde, O'Farrell traveled to Yerba Buena.

Meanwhile, in December a public meeting was held in Yerba Buena to discuss the Alcalde's proposal for a survey of the town. The proposal ran into opposition from "a few independent and proper thinking persons" who objected to the appropriation of money from the sale of lots to pay for a survey of the city. The objectors apparently felt that this money could be better spent to defray municipal expenses or to erect various public improvements, such as a wharf. Some people objected to the survey not because it

would disturb the possession of their lands but because "they regarded their picket fences [as] so valuable." But apparently this argument was ameliorated by the proposal that if people were injured by the necessity of moving fences, they were to be reimbursed by the city. Despite this small group of dissenters, there was much excitement and agreement concerning the need for the survey, and a resolution was passed supporting a "resurvey."⁷

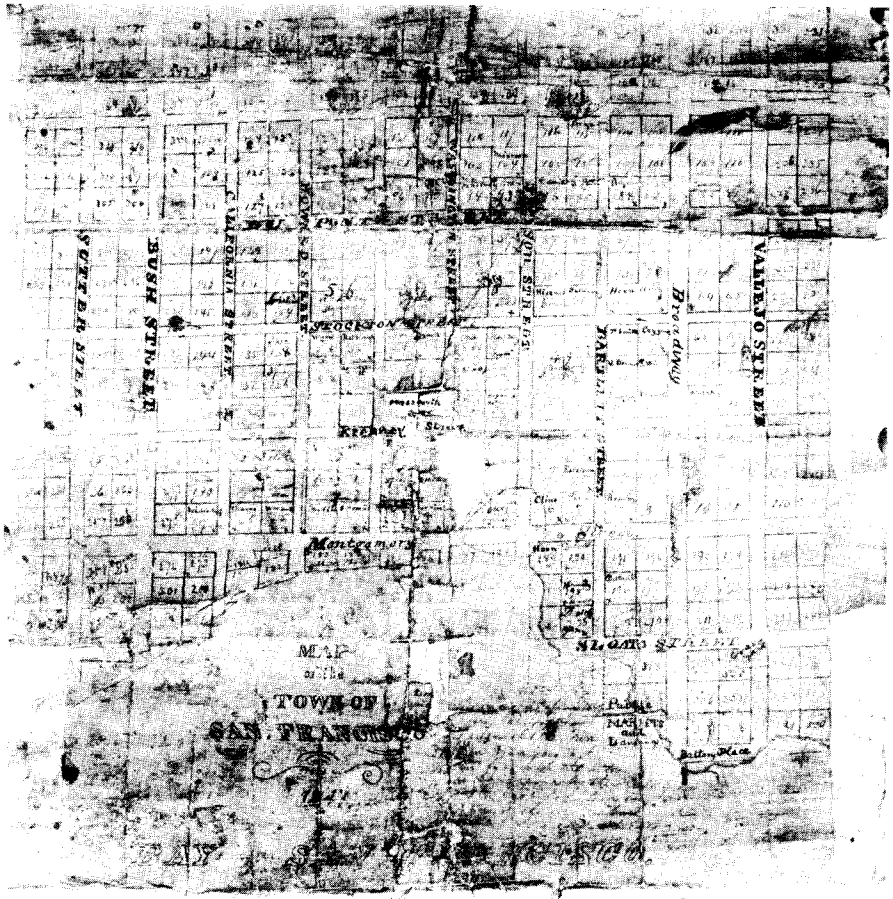
When O'Farrell arrived in Yerba Buena in late December, he found George Hyde acting as Alcalde *ad interim* in the absence of Bartlett.⁸ Although personally opposed to the survey, Hyde was compelled to proceed with the arrangement initiated since O'Farrell had arrived at the request of Bartlett. Following a conference on the morning of December 24, 1846, Hyde sent an official acceptance of O'Farrell's terms for the survey of "certain portions" of the town.⁹

Yet, despite this agreement on terms, Hyde continued to object to the survey. Using his position as Alcalde *ad interim* he arbitrarily limited the extent of O'Farrell's work, assigning him to survey fringe areas. O'Farrell, meanwhile, studied the "previous" survey of Vioget and its extensions, and found it "incorrect." He apparently suggested that a survey of the whole town should be made and a new map compiled "instead of scraps and patches around the edges" as was then intended.¹⁰

O'Farrell, as an experienced surveyor, realized the deficiencies of the Vioget survey. Vioget's North was eleven degrees too far east. The map was drawn at right angles, but "no two streets or lots were parallel" on the ground because of errors in fencing and in surveying. A realignment, however, could be achieved by a change of two and a half degrees in a northeast and southwest direction making five degrees altogether. O'Farrell proposed to change the lines of the streets so that they would conform as much as possible to the topography. O'Farrell also thought that the streets should be widened from sixty to eighty feet in order to ease the growing congestion in developed areas and that Telegraph Hill should be terraced. Unfortunately, these latter improvements were rejected to avoid additional expenditures for a realignment of the buildings already erected. Many of the early fifty-vara* square lots (137 feet 6 inches square) were also inaccurately measured so that the size of the lots varied. A new, accurate survey and a map would certainly guarantee uniformity and protect land titles. This in turn would facilitate the further granting of legal land titles and insure the continued physical growth of Yerba Buena.¹¹

But various factions of the town were in disagreement over the form which O'Farrell's new work should take. One group favored the continuation of the oblique pattern contained in segments of Vioget's work. This pattern would allow for the adaptation of the street extensions to the hilly terrain

*A vara is a Spanish lineal measurement equal to 33 inches. (See Note 11)



Precursor to O'Farrell's map, the Buckelew Map established the rectangular street grid for the downtown area that O'Farrell incorporated in his final plan.

and the sand dunes surrounding the original town site. Influential landowners undoubtedly objected to this proposal. A gridiron street pattern they deemed to be the most convenient plan. An orthogonal pattern of rectangular blocks, straight streets, and right-angle intersections would insure uniformity, could quickly be extended, and more importantly could easily be subdivided. It would also be the most economical form to survey.¹² These citizens thus tried to influence the town authorities to change the form of the survey from its partially oblique form to a completely rectangular pattern. Toward this goal, Benjamin R. Buckelew drafted a redrawing of the area around Portsmouth Square which would be encompassed in any forthcoming survey. Buckelew's map, based on an "old frame map" of Yerba Buena, showed the orderly division which could be achieved from a rectangular pattern.¹³ The actual ground condition of the lots and streets, however, was still one of chaotic disorder. The remedy of these planning prob-

lems was the goal of Jasper O'Farrell from the time when he began his semi-official survey in early January of 1847 to his final combined map in August of 1847.

Jasper O'Farrell's first work in January, 1847, was an addition to the surveyed area of the town of Yerba Buena. Before Alcalde Bartlett left town he had made preparations for the granting of hundred-vara square lots (275 feet square) in Happy Valley, the area of present-day Mission Street. Since a plan was needed to protect the grants, Hyde initially put O'Farrell to work on the first hundred-vara survey of the town laying out eighteen hundred-vara lots.¹⁴ O'Farrell also commenced work on the "longitudinal and transverse" extensions of the streets originally laid out by the Vioget plotting.¹⁵ Meanwhile, the discussion continued concerning the contracted extent of O'Farrell's surveying.

The decision on extent was made by Alcalde Bartlett after his return to office in mid-January. Bartlett, with the approval of the inhabitants of the town, concluded a new contract with O'Farrell for the survey of 500 fifty-vara lots, "exclusive of streets, lanes, or public squares." For this work, O'Farrell was to receive a payment of \$1,500. Using the arrangement contained within the "Buckelew Map," O'Farrell laid out 360 numbered lots within the area bounded by Green, Mason, Sutter, and the Bay water line.¹⁶ When Alcalde Bartlett signed the "Buckelew Map" on February 22, 1847, he was certifying an area now surveyed by O'Farrell. O'Farrell later testified that: "There was no change in the plan or map made by my survey." Indeed there was none. However, the streets in the newly surveyed portion of the town were not rectangular, but were simply "parallel to, and in the same direction" as the streets in the older portion that was then fenced and built upon.¹⁷

In order to achieve parallel streets and rectangular blocks, the new Alcalde, Edwin Bryant, concluded a revised contract with O'Farrell on March 8th. He accepted O'Farrell's proposal to commence the resurvey of the agreed 500 fifty-vara lots, "making the streets and squares at right angles and parallel with one another." Also included in the March 8th contract were the survey of the Bay water line from the extreme southeastern point of the harbor to the beach area behind Juana Briones' house, and "a finished map or plan of the same, with water line, houses, fences, blocks, streets, lanes, and squares." All three provisions were to be included for only an additional \$500, making a total payment of \$2,000.¹⁸

Jasper O'Farrell began his official survey of San Francisco in March of 1847 incorporating his work in San Francisco into his schedule of commitments.¹⁹ In early March he began the squaring of the street intersections and the adjustment of lot locations so that they conformed to the rigid rectangular pattern. The corner of Washington and Kearny Streets was the pivot for these corrections which became popularly known as "O'Farrell's

Swing.”²⁰ By the end of March, O’Farrell had realigned the area of the Buckelew plat. But O’Farrell’s work from January through March did little to satisfy the desire for ready land. A steady influx of immigrants, including the Mormon party and Colonel Jonathan D. Stevenson’s Regiment of New York Volunteers, necessitated the rapid expansion of the area of the town. The surveyed limits of the settlement had to be enlarged too because the evasion and disregard of Mexican laws restricting owners to the purchase of a single lot had centered ownership of prime land in the hands of a small group of speculators. Additional fifty-vara lots were needed both as home sites and business locations. With this impetus additional fifty-vara lots were projected for the northern, southern, and western edges of the already surveyed central core of San Francisco. Prominent citizens also thought that the survey and sale of the beach and water lots, located on the town’s eastern limits fronting the Bay, might attract more settlers and provide a further source of revenue for municipal expenses. No legal title could be obtained for these beach and water lots since they had not been specifically granted to the pueblo of Yerba Buena by the Mexican Government. To circumvent this legal obstruction, a public meeting was held in San Francisco on the 15th of February, 1847, to adopt a series of resolutions to petition for the legalization of the sale of these lots. The resolutions, in the form of a petition, were presented to Military Governor Stephen W. Kearny by Alcalde Edwin Bryant.²¹

Ignoring the fact that he possessed no authority to alter the existing Mexican civil laws of the territory until after formal annexation, Governor Kearny on March 10 granted, conveyed, and released to the people or corporate authority of the town of San Francisco all rights, title, and interest in the beach and water lots. Acting upon this authority, Alcalde Bryant on March 16th announced that the beach and water lots situated between Fort Montgomery and Rincon Point would be surveyed and offered for sale at public auction on the 29th of June.²²

Thus, subsequent to his realignment of the old town in March, O’Farrell began work on the initial surveying of the beach and water lots on the muddy, half-submerged area of Yerba Buena cove. It is not known whether O’Farrell completed his entire initial survey of the beach and water lots in March and April. Since there was a demand for property which could be occupied immediately, O’Farrell next went to work on an extension of the fifty-vara lots of the town. By the 30th of April, O’Farrell plotted 128 fifty-vara lots in the northern area of the town between Greenwich on the North, Green on the South, Montgomery on the East, and Leavenworth on the West. This latter addition brought the total number of fifty-vara lots surveyed to 500, completing O’Farrell’s March 8th contract.²³ During April and May, O’Farrell also added 178 additional fifty-vara lots on the northern, southern, and western edges of the town extending his previous surveying

Time-speckled photograph of Jasper O'Farrell, in possession of his great grandson James G. Coffman of San Francisco, reveals him as dapper and self-possessed.



north to Francisco Street, south to Post Street, and west to Taylor in the central area of the town.²⁴ Following the laying out of these fifty-vara lots, O'Farrell commenced the third phase in the survey of San Francisco after Alcalde George Hyde approved the terms for the surveying of more hundred-vara lots.

San Francisco June 12, 1847

To George Hyde, Esq. Alcalde or Chief Judge of San Francisco
Sir

I hereby agree to survey lots of 100 varas square each in the adjacent to the Southern boundary of the last survey in that part known by the name of Rincon establishing corners to each lot. The numbers of lots to be one hundred or more if required. The whole to be executed in a satisfactory and proper manner as soon as the Survey is completed or within twenty days thereafter.

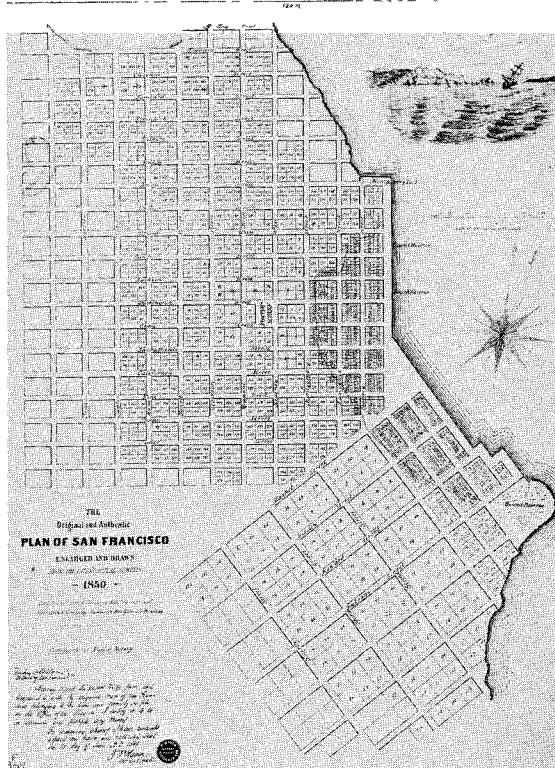
I am, Sir, Respectfully,
Jasper O'Farrell, C.E.

The above is approved—George Hyde
1st Alcalde ²⁵

In June, while surveying the first 36 hundred-vara lots in the southern section of San Francisco, O'Farrell encountered a major obstacle. Five of the fifty-vara lots located in the southeastern corner of the surveyed area of the town overlapped several of the already granted hundred-vara lots along the south side of Market Street between First and Second Streets. In order to retain the original locations of the hundred-vara lots granted by previous Alcaldes to various parties early in 1847, O'Farrell found it necessary to resurvey the hundred-vara lots and the fifty-vara and beach lots from Market Street south to Rincon Point. The probable solution was the development of Market Street as the backbone of the planned city, a 120-foot-wide vista cutting across the original checkerboard pattern. With an artistic flair for the panoramic, O'Farrell pointed Market Street directly at the middle of "*Los Pechos de la Choca*" (Twin Peaks). In so laying out Market Street on its diagonal, O'Farrell considered the fact that the street's southwesterly direction was the general route of travel between the town settlement and the Mission area.²⁶ O'Farrell may have envisioned Market Street as the main thoroughfare of the future around which the business life of the city would gravitate. The correction of the overlapping of the fifty-vara lots and the hundred-vara lots and the plotting of Market Street as a divider between these two subdivisions created gore lots at the corners of Market Street and Sansome, Montgomery, and Kearny. The relocation of the hundred-vara lots along the southern extremities of Market Street necessitated the remeasurement of the previously surveyed beach and water lots south of Market Street to the Rincon. The corrected resurvey of the first 36 hundred-vara lots added \$150 to the total price of the hundred-vara survey. Altering the location of the southern beach and water lots and the fifty-vara lots on the Rincon added an additional expense of \$475 to the estimated expense of \$1,250, bringing the total for the complete survey of the beach and water lots to \$1,725.²⁷

This delay in the completion of the beach and water lot survey forced a postponement of the sale set for June 29, 1847. On July 10th, William Pettet, the sheriff of San Francisco, announced that the new date of the public auction sale of the beach and water lots would be Tuesday, the 20th of July. Appended to this announcement was the notice that "an adequate map of this property will be published in a few days and exhibited to the public at the Alcalde's Office."²⁸

An official "Map of the beach and water lots of San Francisco, A.D. 1847," prepared by Jasper O'Farrell, was ready by July 17th.²⁹ Outlined on it were the 444 beach and water lots, each with a width of sixteen and two-thirds varas and a depth of fifty varas (45 feet 10 inches by 137 feet 6 inches). The lots were located on the eastern boundary of the city fronting on the Bay between the low and high water marks. After studying the ebb of tidal variance, O'Farrell indicated the ordinary high water mark on his map by a wavy line extending from Fort Montgomery to Rincon Point.³⁰



Redrawing of the compiled map entitled "The Original and Authentic Plan of San Francisco," delineates all the areas that O'Farrell surveyed in 1847.

The sale of the beach and water lots commenced on the 20th of July and continued for three consecutive days. The lots between the continuation of Clay and Sacramento were not sold because they were included within the area reserved for government use. Although fewer than half of the lots (approximately two hundred) were actually sold, financially the sale was a success.³¹ The revenue from the sale provided the town with the means for further improvements. But the July sale of the beach and water lots did little to alleviate the need for land for immediate expansion because four-fifths of these lots were entirely under water at high tide.

By mid-July, O'Farrell had completed the surveying of 136 hundred-vara lots in the area south of Market Street. Since this section was considered less desirable than the central portion of the city, the hundred-vara lots were offered as an inducement. These large lots ran south along First through Fourth Streets to the water line of the Bay just south of Brannan Street and southwest on Market as far as Fifth Street, skirting the swamps southwest of Mission and Fourth Streets.³² By the beginning of August of 1847, O'Farrell had added 95 additional fifty-vara lots to the fringe areas of his previous surveying in the northern and southern portions of San Francisco.³³ He completed his work in San Francisco when he compiled a total map,

probably in August of 1847, combining the several surveys of the town on which he had been working since January of 1847.³⁴ Soon after the completion of this work which left a permanent pattern for the future development of San Francisco, Jasper O'Farrell left San Francisco to continue his surveying in other developing areas of the northern Bay region and to assume a prominent role in the development and settlement of Sonoma County.³⁵

O'Farrell's surveying had an immediate stimulating effect on the growth of San Francisco. In the year between June, 1846, and June, 1847, only thirty houses had been constructed and these were flimsy structures. In July and August of 1847 alone, twenty more houses with sturdier superstructures were erected. Uniform lots now lined the straight streets and squared intersections. The new, accurate survey and the certified map protected legal land titles and insured the physical growth of San Francisco. Many public improvements, such as leveling various sand hills and grading public thoroughfares, remained to be initiated, but the pattern had been established. Lieutenant Edward Gilbert, summing up his evaluation of Jasper O'Farrell's work and its immediate effects, optimistically looked to the future:

I cannot suppress a desire to say that San Francisco is destined to become the great commercial emporium of the north Pacific coast. With advantages of so fine a harbor, and the enterprise of so hardy and intelligent a race of pioneers, it can scarcely be otherwise.³⁶

NOTES

1. John Tillotson, *The Golden Americas: A Story of Great Discoveries and Daring Deeds* (London: Ward, Lock, and Tyler, [1869]), 366-367.

2. William A. Richardson, the founder of the pueblo of Yerba Buena, drew a one-street plan of the pueblo for Mexican Governor Figueroa in 1835 to show the location of his hundred-vara square lot. The second effort at a plan for the pueblo was done in 1839 by another sea captain, Jean Jacques Vioget, who was chosen reportedly because he was the only individual who possessed the equipment necessary to conduct the attempt at surveying the area. The deficiencies of Vioget's survey and its extensions during the period between 1839 and 1845 will be discussed later in this essay. For a brief presentation on the earlier surveys see Neal Harlow, *The Maps of San Francisco Bay from the Spanish Discovery in 1769 to the American Occupation* ([San Francisco]: Book Club of California, 1950).

3. Washington A. Bartlett acted as Alcalde of Yerba Buena (then San Francisco) from August 26, 1846, to February 22, 1847. He was elected Alcalde by the people on September 15, 1847. The name of the town was changed from Yerba Buena to San Francisco by a proclamation of Alcalde Bartlett published in the *California Star*, January 30, 1847, p. 4, c. 3.

4. Deposition of Charles E. Pickett, May 15, 1854, San Francisco vs. the United States. *Documents, Depositions, and Brief of Law Points Raised thereon on behalf of the United States, in case no. 280* . . . (San Francisco: Commercial Power Presses, 1854), p. 57. Bartlett began to grant lots on November 16, 1846.

5. Jasper O'Farrell was born c. May, 1817, in Wexford, Ireland. He had a strong educational background, including a probable college education in Dublin and a degree in civil engineering. Restrictions on the practice of his profession after 1833 influenced O'Farrell to leave Ireland in 1840. He embarked from England on a British surveying expedition in 1841 bound for the Pacific coast of South America. He left the expedition at Buenos Aires, crossed the pampas and traversed the Cordilleras of South America in the summer of 1841. From Valparaíso he worked his way northward arriving in the San Francisco Bay area in November of 1843. Settling near San Rafael on Timothy Murphy's Rancho San Pedro, Santa Margarita y Las Gallinas, O'Farrell commenced his work in California as a surveyor. From 1844 through 1846, O'Farrell completed the survey of at least twenty-four Mexican land grants in northern and southern California and established his competency as a skilled surveyor. He acted as the quartermaster on Sutter's expeditionary force in 1845 in support of Mexican Governor Micheltorena. Following his return from southern California in 1846, he again settled in San Rafael where Bartlett's letter started him on a new facet of his surveying career: city planning.

6. Washington A. Bartlett to Jasper O'Farrell, Yerba Buena, November 26, 1846, California Historical Society, Jasper O'Farrell Papers.

7. Editorial signed "Yerba Buena" (Charles E. Pickett), *California Star*, January 9, 1847, p. 3, c. 2-3. Testimony of Jasper O'Farrell and Sam Brannan, Paul Lestrade v. Frederick Barth, #10624, California State Archives, California Supreme Court Record Group, Transcript of Appeal, 1860, pp. 28 and 19 (hereinafter cited as Lestrade v. Barth, #10624).

8. George Hyde acted as Alcalde *ad interim* from December 15, 1846, to January 20, 1847, by the appointment of Captain Joseph B. Hull, while Bartlett was a captive of Francisco Sánchez.

9. George Hyde to Jasper O'Farrell, Yerba Buena (or "St. Francisco"), December 24, 1846, in "Jasper O'Farrell Correspondence," *Quarterly of the Society of California Pioneers*, X (1933), 98.

10. Editorial, *California Star*, January 9, 1847, p. 3, c. 2-3.

11. A vara is equal to 33 inches. Testimony of Jasper O'Farrell, Lestrade v. Barth, #10624, p. 27; Testimony of Washington A. Bartlett, Henry Rice v. James Cunningham, #16016, California State Archives, California Supreme Court Record Group, Transcript of Appeal, 1864, p. 100 (hereinafter cited as Rice v. Cunningham, #16016). See also John S. Hittell, *A History of the City of San Francisco* . . . (San Francisco: A. L. Bancroft & Company, 1878), 114-116; Hubert H. Bancroft, *History of California* (San Francisco: The History Book Company, 1884-1890), V, 655, Note; John Tilton, *The Golden Americas* (London, [1869]), 369; and *Sonoma Democrat*, November 18, 1875, p. 2, c. 1.

12. Mel Scott, *The San Francisco Bay Area: A Metropolis in Perspective* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1959), 24; John W. Reys, *Town Planning in Frontier America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), 426-427

13. The "Bucklew Map" was drawn while George Hyde was Alcalde *ad interim*, because he stated that "before January 1st, or about that time, there was no other map to define lots granted" but a map vaguely identified as "Plan of Yerba Buena 1846." According to Bartlett, the map was a copy of an untitled plan in the city archives which he had received from José de Jesús Noe, the last Mexican Alcalde. The numbers of the lots on both maps were the same, but the names of the respective streets varied. Testimony of George Hyde and Washington A. Bartlett, *Rice v. Cunningham*, #16016, pp. 80, 85, and 100; Benjamin R. Buckelew to Editor, San Francisco, November 4, 1848, *Californian*, November 4, 1848, p. 3, c. 2. The map projected 360 numbered lots between Green Street on the North to Sutter on the South, and from Mason Street to the water line. A photograph of the original "Bucklew Map," "Bartlett Map," or "Alcalde Map" (names by which this single map is known) in California Historical Society Map Collection, San Francisco, 1800-1850.

14. Testimony of George Hyde and Washington A. Bartlett, *Rice v. Cunningham*, #16016, pp. 80, and 107-108. A "Surveyor" was paid \$30 for work in January, 1847, according to the bill of February 22, 1847, sent by the Alcalde's Office to the Treasurer of the city (California Historical Society, William A. Leidesdorff Papers). In payment for his work O'Farrell was also granted Lot No. 9, a hundred-vara lot mid-block on the north side of Mission Street between Second and Third Streets, from George Hyde on January 1, 1847. Alfred Wheeler, *Land Titles in San Francisco* (San Francisco: Alta California Steam Printing Establishment, 1852), 31. The results of this survey were incorporated into his later hundred-vara survey.

15. Copy of Contract for the Survey of the Town with Jasper O'Farrell, San Francisco, March 8, 1847, Bancroft Library, Elbert P. Jones, [Correspondence and Papers, 1846-1852], C-B 464.

16. *Ibid.* There were a total of 372 fifty-vara lots surveyed prior to March 6, the date of O'Farrell's bill to the city for this portion of his surveying. Only 360 were numbered as ten numbered grants contained 2 to 4 fifty-vara lots. Curiously, shown a map identified as the "Old Map of Yerba Buena" (copy annexed to case is redrawing of Buckelew Map), O'Farrell testified that "this is the first map I ever saw of the City." This testimony seemingly contradicts the newspaper report of his study of the "previous survey" during January of 1847 (see footnote 10). Dr. Neal Harlow first proposed the interpretation that the "Bucklew Map" was possibly intended as "an official American restatement" of revised plans for the town to be used as a basis for O'Farrell's work. Neal Harlow, *Maps of San Francisco Bay* ([San Francisco], 1950), 96-97. It was indeed this and more.

17. Testimony of Jasper O'Farrell, *Lestrade v. Barth*, #10624, pp. 27-29. Copy of Contract for the Survey of the town with Jasper O'Farrell, San Francisco, March 8, 1847, Bancroft Library, Elbert P. Jones, [Correspondence and Papers, 1846-1852], C-B 464. William S. Clark in his recollections compiled in 1885 states that he assisted O'Farrell in making the "first survey of the old part of town," although including a much larger area than the "Bucklew Map." He credits Alcalde Bartlett with directing the survey and naming the streets. *Recollections of a San Francisco Pioneer of '46*, Bancroft Library, C-D 245:1, p. 8.

18. Edwin Bryant was Alcalde from February 22, 1847, to June 1, 1847. Copy of Contract for the Survey of the Town with Jasper O'Farrell, San Francisco, March 8, 1847, Bancroft Library, Elbert P. Jones, [Correspondence and Papers, 1846-1852], C-B 464. Note: O'Farrell did not want to survey more than 100 lots in the wooded area situated on the southern and western edges of the town.

19. Working across the Bay O'Farrell planned and laid out the new town of Franciscia in May, 1847 (name changed latter to Benicia). O'Farrell also looked into the location of Thomas O. Larkin's Presidio claim in early March.

20. [Bill to the Town of San Francisco, August, 1847], "Jasper O' Farrell Correspondence," *Quarterly of the Society of California Pioneers*, X (1933), 99; Testimony of Jasper O'Farrell, *Lestrade v. Barth*, #10624, p. 28.

21. *California Star*, February 20, 1847, p. 2, c. 3; and August 28, 1847, p. 1 c. 2-p. 2 c. 2. The beach and water lots were unoccupied because of the Mexican Government restrictions concerning settlement of the area within 200 varas of the water line of Yerba Buena cove.

22. U. S. Congress, House, *California and New Mexico*, House Executive Document, 31st Cong. 1st sess., Doc. 17 (Washington, D. C., 1849-1850), p. 146. *California Star*, March 20, 1847, p. 4, c. 2; *Californian*, March 20, 1847, p. 3, c. 2.

23. [Bill to Town of San Francisco, August, 1847], "Jasper O'Farrell Correspondence," *Quarterly of the Society of California Pioneers*, X (1933), 99.

24. The dating of this survey is based on the numbering of the fifty-vara lots and the date when the first lot of an area was granted. Wheeler, *Land Titles in San Francisco*, 39-55. No public sales of the fifty-vara and hundred-vara lots were held. As the survey and plan of each area of the fifty- and hundred-vara lots were completed these lots were offered at private sale by the Alcalde at a fixed price for each size. The price was fixed by law at \$12 for a fifty-vara square lot and \$25 for a hundred-vara square lot plus a cost of \$3.62 for the deed and recording. All sales were strictly cash transactions. The conditions stipulated that the landowner must erect a building and fence the property within one year after the date of purchase. The necessary men, money, and lumber were, however, not available for such an effort. O'Farrell testified that he "made a plan of the Town first in April or May, 1847." Other than this statement, no documentation is available to support this assertion. Since it was the American practice of having a map made of the area before lots were granted, a map may have been made of the first 500 fifty-vara lots in order to fulfill his March 8th contract commitment, or perhaps one of all the fifty-vara lots north of Market Street.

25. Jasper O'Farrell to George Hyde, San Francisco, June 12, 1847, "Jasper O'Farrell Correspondence," *Quarterly of the Society of California Pioneers*, X (1933), 98. George Hyde served as Alcalde of San Francisco from June 1, 1847, to March 20, 1848.

26. John S. Hittell, *A History of the City of San Francisco* (San Francisco, 1878), 116.

27. Jasper O'Farrell to George Hyde, San Francisco, June, 1847, "Jasper O'Farrell Correspondence," *Quarterly of the Society of California Pioneers*, X (1933), 99.

28. *Californian*, June 19, 1847, p. 2, c. 3; *Californian*, July 10, 1847, p. 3, c. 3; *California Star*, July 17, 1847, p. 4, c. 1.

29. *Californian*, July 17, 1847, p. 3, c. 1. Major James A. Hardie (Commander of 1st New York Regt. of Volunteers at San Francisco) to Alcalde George Hyde, San Francisco, July 18, 1847, in John W. Dwinelle, *The Colonial History of the City of San Francisco*, 4th edition (San Francisco: Towne & Bacon, 1867), Addenda, 259 and 264. Neither the original nor any copy of this map is known to exist.

30. *California Star*, August 28, 1847, p. 1, c. 2. *Californian*, September 4, 1847, p. 2, c. 3.

31. Prices ranged from \$50 to \$600. The conditions for purchase of these lots were simply one quarter of the bargained price at the time of sale, another quarter six months later, a third quarter twelve months from the date of sale, and the last quarter of the sum after eighteen months plus the interest of ten per cent on the unpaid balance. *Californian*, July 24, 1847, p. 2, c. 2; *California Star*, August 28, 1847, p. 1, c. 2-3.

32. [Bill to the Town of San Francisco, August, 1847], "Jasper O'Farrell Correspondence," *Quarterly of the Society of California Pioneers*, X (1933), 99.

33. *Ibid*, p. 99.

34. The original of the compiled map was reportedly hanging in the Recorder's Office in the San Francisco City Hall during the nineteenth century and was probably destroyed in the San Francisco earthquake and fire of 1906. There is a redrawing of the map entitled "The Original and Authentic Plan of San Francisco" in the possession of the California Historical Society Map Collection, San Francisco, 1800-1850. Another copy is in the Bancroft Library, Map F869 S3 1850 G79. There are two altered photostats of the above map done by Thomas P. Burns which add to the title the words "Jasper O'Farrell 1847." One of these photostats can be found in Thomas P. Burns, *Centennial of the City of San Francisco, 1835-1935*, Bancroft Library, (typewritten), C-R 73, p. 19; the other is in the Wells Fargo Bank History Room.

35. After his surveying in San Francisco, O'Farrell continued his profession, completing the surveys of eight more Mexican land grants in northern California and the nucleus of the towns of Tuleberg (Stockton) and Sonoma. O'Farrell then turned to new pursuits: ranching, farming, and mining. The year 1847 marked the beginning of his acquisition and development of roughly 60,000 acres of his three purchased Mexican land grants: Estéro Americano and Cañada de Jonive in Sonoma County and Cañada de Capay in Yolo County. In his public life he acted as an important and qualified witness in many of the land grant cases before the U. S. Board of Land Commissioners (U.S. Commission for Ascertaining and Settling Private Land Claims in California). He served as a state senator during 1859 and 1860 for the Eleventh District consisting of Marin, Sonoma, and Mendocino Counties; he ran for election as Lieutenant-Governor on the Breckinridge Democratic ticket of 1861 headed by John R. McConnell. From 1870 to 1873 he was a member of the Board of State Harbor Commissioners for San Francisco. Following numerous personal and financial setbacks, Jasper O'Farrell died in San Francisco on November 16, 1875.

36. *California Star*, August 28, 1847, p. 2, c. 1.

PICTURE SOURCES: Bancroft Library of University of California, page 173; California Historical Society, pages 166, 168; James G. Coffman, San Francisco, page 171.

Book Reviews

Modoc War: Its Military History and Topography. By Erwin N. Thompson. Preface by Keith Murray. (Sacramento: Argus Books, 1971. 253 pp. illus. \$12.50.)

Reviewed by PAT GIVAN, *secondary California History and English teacher; and Chairman of the Modoc County History Committee.*

MODOC WAR opens with a brief description of the events that led up to the actual fighting. The pattern of the destruction of the Modocs of Northern California had been set elsewhere and before in the gross mismanagement of Indian affairs. It was a pattern that any fan of TV westerns can easily recite—white invasion and settlement, with increasing wariness and distrust on both sides; treaties made and broken, removal and resettlement; misunderstandings, individual violences and retaliations, and finally, punishment by the Great White Father by means of the bluecoats, and at last, extermination of the Indians and their way of life.

In the case of the Modocs, Verne F. Ray's "Primitive Pragmatists," there was only slight deviation from the pattern. It took them a very long time to die, partly because of their native intelligence, and partly because of the nature of part of their habitat.

Before the white man came, they had occupied a large, semi-square territory that is now cut in two by the Oregon-California boundary. They had a life-style that included permanent villages, a rather severe social structure, a religion, and an economy that was to a large degree based upon catching their Pit River neighbors and trading them as slaves to the Klamaths to the north. They had made an exquisite adaption to their hard, brittle, and beautiful land, making use of nearly everything that grew, swam, flew, or walked for food, shelter, clothing, and weapons. The land was theirs, and they mastered the art of survival in their land. Even their language was almost exclusively theirs, for their Klamath cousins understood them very poorly, and the Shastas to the west, the Pit Rivers to the south, and the Paiutes to the east understood them not at all.

The Modocs, with fighting skills sharpened by centuries of defeating all their fierce neighbors, made life miserable for the whites who first tried to pass through their territory. Yet, with a strange kind of resignation, they allowed the whites to live when they first settled on Modoc land. For a few years, they lived with the whites in a kind of mutually distrustful coexistence. But, after their fashion, the white men wanted everything, so they began to agitate for the Modocs to be pushed out of their Tule Lake and Lost River villages and removed to the Klamath Indian Reservation. In 1864, the Klamaths made a treaty with the Oregon Superintendent of Indian Affairs, by which they actually were given nearly all the lands that they had traditionally claimed. Also in 1864, the Modocs made a treaty for their lands with Steele, a California Indian agent. However, he was removed from office and the treaty was void. The Oregon agent stepped across the border, and tried to make a treaty with the Modocs, to pull them onto the Klamath Reservation and thus make the lion and the lamb, or the two lions, lie down at Uncle Sam's feet forever. Part of the Modocs, under Old Schonchin, moved to the Klamath Reservation, and stayed there (and their descendants are still there).

A group of militants, under Captain Jack, repeatedly left the reservation, mostly



The Modocs fought skillfully from well-nigh impregnable positions in the labyrinth of lava tubes and rock formations. The war attracted wide attention and drew correspondents from New York and Europe. *Harper's Weekly* covered the campaign thoroughly in text and pictures. (Courtesy of the California State Library, Sacramento.)



110. MODOC IN POSITION. PHOTOGRAPH BY THE FINE ARTS.

because their pride could not tolerate the insults and indignities thrown at them by the Klamaths. When, finally, they refused to go back to the Klamath Reservation, the Army, in the form of a company of Fort Klamath regulars, went after them, and the war was on.

Thus, between November 1872 and June 1873, a band of 50 to 70 Modoc Indians held out against a total 1,055 Army regulars, volunteers, and Warm Springs Indian Scouts. As Mr. Thompson shows us, the Modocs under Captain Jack repeatedly outmaneuvered and out-fought the U.S. Army. The worst of the fighting was on terrain of the Indians' choice—the lava beds in southeastern Modoc territory—an area which might easily be the Gateway to Hell. Full of honeycomb caves, natural pitfalls, and torturous and extensive flow-pathways, it provided a natural fortification for the Indians and a horrendous nightmare for their pursuers.

The total casualties for the Army side were: Regulars—enlisted men—killed in action, 46; wounded in action, 65; Officers—killed in action, 7 (including Brigadier General E. R. S. Canby, commander of the Columbia Department, Division of the Pacific); wounded in action, 4; Volunteers—enlisted men—killed in action, 4, wounded in action, 4. On the other hand, these were the Indian casualties: Men—killed in action, suicide, murdered, and hanged—approximately 16; women, several killed and wounded, total unknown.

From the point of view of pure strategy, the Modocs out-guessed and out-classed the Army at every turn, but they lost the war, principally because a group of Modocs managed to taunt their leaders into murdering Gen. Canby and Dr. Taylor while under a flag of truce. The leaders, Captain Jack, Schonchin John, Black Jim, and Boston Charley, were hunted down, caught, and—by sentence of the Army commission that tried them and with the approval of President Grant—hanged. Their bodies were buried in graves at Fort Klamath, and on the site of that deserted fort the four shallow depressions can be seen today. There lie, supposedly, the headless skeletons of four men who died, for all practical purposes, fighting for their country. Mr. Thompson presents what appears to be irrefutable evidence that, as has been darkly whispered for a century, the heads of Jack and the three others who died with him were severed by an Army surgeon, preserved, and sent east to be exhibited in the Army Medical Museum.

This unforgivable act of savage barbarism on the part of the Army could not have accomplished much of anything. If it was meant as a lesson to all Indians, the secrecy was illogical; and the Army Medical Museum was a poor place to teach lessons to Indians. In any case the effect was negligible and the lesson unlearned; for in 1873, the Little Big Horn was still three years in the future.

The two teenaged boys who were tried as accomplices in the Canby murder were sentenced to life in Alcatraz; one of them died of tuberculosis there; the other eventually was released to return to the Klamath Indian Reservation. The remainder of Captain Jack's militants—men, women, and children—were exiled to Quapaw Agency, Indian Territory, where those who did not die immediately lived in poverty, disgrace, filth, and disease until they were returned to the Klamath Reservation in the early 1900's.

Modoc War is a meticulously researched and marvelously well-documented recapitulation of the death struggle of the Modocs. It clearly observes that although some Modocs were removed peacefully to Klamath Reservation and lived to perpetuate their kind, the tribe and the life-style died on the scaffold at Fort Klamath and at the Quapaw Agency.

The action of the war was very complicated and took place upon one of the most unfriendly terrains in the United States. The copious notes of *Modoc War*, plus the

fine appendices which contain excellent detailed maps, lists, and statistics, help the reader toward an understanding of why a simple corralling of a few recalcitrant Indians should have taken so long and cost so many lives.

The book does, however, contain a few startling inaccuracies: The Paiutes, mentioned in the Introduction, are not and never were Snakes; New Camp Warner, even by the measurement of the most carefully-flying crow, was never as close to the Lava Beds as sixty miles, and it was certainly much more distant by military roads.

Modoc War, the Preface modestly asserts, is a "reinterpretation" of the debacle which occurred a hundred years ago in the Lava Beds of present Modoc County, California. But the book seems much more than just a reinterpretation. Mr. Thompson has succeeded in writing a very readable factual and unbiased report of one of the ugliest incidents in the history of the United States, and in making it as fresh as though it had happened yesterday.

* * * * *

Modoc War is out in a limited edition of 1000 copies. If he brings out another edition, Mr. Thompson might do well to amend the final line of the main text—it states that the Modoc War constituted "A day to remember." He might instead say that "It was a day that might well be forgotten." It might well be forgotten, but it probably never will be.

Revolution and Intervention: The Diplomacy of Taft and Wilson with Mexico, 1910-1917. By P. Edward Haley. (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1970. xiii+294 pp. \$10.00.)

Reviewed by N. STEPHEN KANE, *Assistant Professor of History at the University of Wisconsin, Oshkosh; specialist in United States-Latin American relations; and Associate Editor of SOCIETAS—A REVIEW OF SOCIAL HISTORY.*

P. EDWARD HALEY'S ACCOUNT of the diplomacy of Taft and Wilson with Mexico contains no surprises. In three chapters devoted to Taft and eight focusing on Wilson, the author has examined the important events and crises in Mexican-American relations during the initial phases of the Mexican Revolution to 1917: Taft's "maneuvers" along the border in response to the Madero uprising; the complicity of Ambassador Henry Lane Wilson in the coup against Madero; the efforts of President Wilson to oust Huerta, especially the intervention at Vera Cruz; the president's attempts to negotiate with the various revolutionary factions and his ultimate decision to recognize Carranza; the Pershing expedition; and the impact of the Zimmermann telegram. His sources are familiar, his interpretations standard, and his conclusions predictable.

Haley's main effort is directed toward describing how the Mexican policies of the two administrations were formulated and implemented, and explaining why they did or did not interfere in Mexican internal affairs. He concludes that though Taft was motivated by a basic hostility to revolutionary change, he operated within a narrowly defined range of objectives—i.e., the protection of American property rights in Mexico—which permitted him to rationalize "nonintervention by stressing that intervention would provoke the very destruction of American lives and property he desired to prevent." (p. 260) Unlike his predecessor, Wilson appreciated the socio-economic aspirations of the revolutionaries, but he was impelled to intervene because his whole policy was predicated on a desire to control the destiny of the Revolution; that is, to shape its outcome within a Western political context. Wilson's course, the

author implies in his epilogue, demonstrates the tendency of Americans to "universalize" their own revolutionary experience, a practice which Haley believes makes effective and constructive responses to foreign revolutions in the twentieth century difficult if not impossible.

Unfortunately, a number of defects limit the volume's usefulness as a scholarly tool. The author's literary style is not only uninspired, but he employs the unnecessary and annoying technique of quoting extensive passages from the documents, often stringing these quotations together with the aid of one or two transitional sentences. In certain respects the bibliography is deficient; important manuscript collections such as the papers of John J. Pershing and Frank L. Polk have not been consulted, and no attempt has been made to probe the Mexican sources. Consequently, Haley's treatment is not always well-balanced, and he fails to support adequately his contention that the Mexican revolutionary leaders skillfully exploited the vagaries and inconsistencies in Wilson's policies. More important, he apparently believes that policy formulation takes place in some sort of vacuum, unaffected by domestic politics, public opinion, or the activities of special interest groups. Finally, a few of his assertions about Robert Lansing are questionable, and his statement that in the *modus vivendi* of 1923 (Bucareli Agreements) "the Mexican government had yielded more than it had won . . ." (p. 79) is simply not so.

The student and nonprofessional reader will find Haley's book sufficiently worthwhile, but for those historians who are familiar with Lowry and Link, it has little to offer.

Anglo-Spanish Rivalry in North America. By J. Leitch Wright.
(Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1971. XIII + 257 pp. \$10.00 hardbound.)

Reviewed by W. MICHAEL MATHES, author and authority on naval voyages to the Pacific, and Associate Professor of History at the University of San Francisco.

Anglo-Spanish Rivalry in North America is a survey of the conflict between Spain and England for control of the present-day United States, primarily the southeastern region, from the mid-sixteenth century to 1819. Professor Wright has consulted extensive archival holdings as well as published primary and secondary works, and although little new has been gleaned from this research, his study is concise and well written.

In his first three chapters, Professor Wright narrates the history of the initial exploration of the Atlantic Seaboard of North America by Spain and England, the rising conflict between Spain on the one hand and France and England on the other in the sixteenth century, and the strategic occupation of Florida by Spain in 1565. The next four chapters treat of the establishment of English Virginia, encroachments into Spanish claims in Carolina and Georgia, Anglo-Indian alliances, and the English occupation of Spanish-claimed Georgia as a result of these alliances.

Diplomacy, war, smuggling, and Franco-Spanish alliances are treated in chapters eight, nine, and ten, and their relationship to the overall picture of Spanish holdings in Louisiana and the Floridas are discussed. The final five chapters deal with Spain's role in the American Revolution, post-revolutionary Anglo-Indian-Spanish *ententes* against the United States, and the decline of Spanish power in the Americas due to the Napoleonic Wars and the Latin American Wars of Independence.

Throughout the work events in North America are related to European and Latin American struggles for a balance of power, and the complexities of Anglo-Spanish diplomacy and symbolic possession as opposed to effective occupation are well covered. Nevertheless, little is said of the Nootka Sound Controversy, Drake in California, or of the United States' role in Spain's decline in the Southeast. Although these are oft-told histories, the work's general format could have profited from a broader view of North America and from more detailed treatment of these events.

Notes to the text, an analytical index, and an extensive bibliography follow the body of the book. This reviewer, despite the author's disclaimer, considers the bibliography to be the primary original contribution here, for although citations to archival materials are vague (e.g., the citing of A.G.I., Audiencia de México by inclusive dates, thus implying that over 3,000 bundles of documents were consulted), and the author has justified the use of outdated Archivo General de Indias numbers on the grounds that many libraries in the United States still employ them (this certainly does not encourage the updating of catalogs 40 years in arrears!), the published materials cited are very inclusive.

While a good general study, Professor Wright's book unfortunately does not fill the need for a single-volume detailed treatise of the conflict of Spain and England for colonial possessions and trade advantages in North America. The more specialized works of Bolton, Caughey, Crane, Lanning, TePaske, Whitaker, and others remain the standards in this field.

Nevada Ghost Towns & Mining Camps. By Stanley Paher. (Berkeley: Howell North. 1970. \$15.00.)

Reviewed by DAYTON LUMMIS, *former Associate Curator of History at the Oakland Museum.*

MARK TWAIN WROTE, in *Roughing It*: "In no other land, in modern times, have towns so absolutely died and disappeared, as in the old mining regions of California." Today, that statement would be even more true of Nevada, which is literally dotted with abandoned sites where mining camps sprung up, flourished as towns, and vanished, sometimes almost overnight. But the essence of what it was all about is preserved in Stanley Paher's remarkable book, an outstanding collection of photographs and detailed text. This well-organized analysis deals with over 575 Nevada mining camps, great and small, and thoroughly documents the energies which men expended in the extraction of precious metals in an essentially remote and hostile environment. Paher shows the processes of abandonment and decay as ore deposits gave out, and the way in which the desert reclaims the scenes of man's brief tenancy—a process which may be observed even today on the outskirts of such modern towns as Reno and Carson City. "Like a tin can, a mining camp often lies where it is thrown. . .," wrote an early Nevada newspaper editor, and scene after scene from Mr. Paher's well-researched selection of photographs amply demonstrates the acuteness of this observation. And the faces of the nameless men who made this history stare out from the detailed and well-produced photographs; typical of a Western mining rush, no dandies these, but probably the worst-dressed and most unsavoury appearing groups of men in history.

One is impressed by the care and research the author has put into this book. Organized by geographical region, town by town, with useful and well-drawn maps, Mr. Paher's book has covered Nevada as thoroughly as did the early treasure hunters. We

are continually reminded of the extensive development of the state in prior years, and the degree to which that development has simply vanished.

After spending some time with this book, the reader will probably want to visit some of the scenes of these forgotten mining camps, where in the quiet starkness of the desert one can recapture some of the feeling of what it was like in those times. This urge is obviously anticipated, for an additional bonus is an excellent chapter on desert travel. All in all, a most worthwhile addition to the portrayal of our Western experience, with an admirably bright and attractive jacket.

Origins of Hydraulic Mining in California. By Philip Ross May. (Oakland: The Holmes Book Company. 1970. 62 pp. illus. \$6.95.)

Reviewed by W. TURRENTINE JACKSON, Professor of History at the University of California at Davis.

PHILIP ROSS MAY travelled a great distance from his New Zealand home to study California mining. One phase that interested him was hydraulic operations, long recognized by historians as California's unique contribution to the world-wide industry. In an introduction, May comments on the importance of this process, perhaps to justify his investigation. After explaining in technical terms just what is meant by hydraulic mining, he presents figures proving that at least twenty-five per cent of California's gold production prior to 1884 was by this method. Moreover, the hydraulic process accelerated the transformation of the California mining industry from a highly individualistic business to a capitalistic endeavor with specialized labor. Hydraulic activity not only resulted in the classic conflict between the miners of the Sierra foothills and the farmers in the Great Valley, fully described in Robert Kelley's well-known book, but also contributed a more positive legacy in the elaborate system of dams, reservoirs, and ditches subsequently utilized for irrigation, generation of hydro-electric power, and municipal water systems. Indirectly, hydraulic mining also provided impetus to the study of geological science.

May has joined the ranks of western American historians who continue to lament the emphasis on the initial, romantic aspect of gold rushes to the neglect of later, more mature phases of the industry dealing with engineering, technology, investment, management, and labor.

The author addresses himself to basic questions still in dispute: "Was hydraulicking a California invention or had it been anticipated on earlier mining frontiers? Was it an invention, a chance discovery, or a simple evolution? When, where, and under what circumstances was hydraulicking introduced to the gold country of California?" He asserts the claim that hydraulic mining had its origins in the gold rush of California is uncontestable. Beyond this point, all is uncertainty. With meticulous attention to the details of local history, May traces the introduction of various inventions and innovations that evolved into hydraulic mining procedures—tom, sluice box, water ditch, gravel sluicing, and bank blasting. Virtually everything took place in the region north of Amador County, most of it in Yuba and Nevada County, and specifically in the Nevada City area. One gains the impression that hydraulic mining evolved from pragmatic attention to practical problems and on occasional chance discovery, rather than being suddenly conceived by a stroke of genius.

Then the question is raised, "who was the father of hydraulicking?" Edward E.

Matteson or Anthony Chabot? Again the verdict is ambivalent. Both men made a contribution. Their careers offer a magnificent contrast in life styles. Matteson was a man of the masses who participated in a folk movement, one who possessed technical ingenuity, was alienated from society, and became an economic failure after the placer claims gave out. Chabot's career symbolizes the entrepreneur, the rational capitalist who adjusted to new situations making money from water rather than gold, engaged in philanthropy and honored in the closing years of his life.

May has achieved in doing what every historian wishes to do: to report and interpret a subject so thoroughly that the research and writing never needs to be done again. Some may dismiss the effort as an academic exercise. Others will question the justification for publishing a thin book of approximately seventy-five pages in a limited edition at a comparatively high price. Perhaps this young man from Down Under has issued a challenge to resident, professional California historians, most of whom would consider his topic too specialized to merit serious study. When all is said, investigations in local history, when done as well as this one, provide the solid foundations upon which historians with broader, interpretive interests can build.

Archaeological Explorations on San Nicolas Island. By Bruce Bryan.
(Los Angeles, Southwest Museum, 1970. 160 pp. \$8.75.)

Reviewed by HELEN C. SMITH, *former editor and currently associate editor of the PACIFIC COAST ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY QUARTERLY.*

BRUCE BRYAN, Curator of Southwest Museum, has written a report spanning 32 years in his life and at least 4000 years in the aboriginal occupancy of San Nicolas Island in the south Santa Barbara Channel. The most isolated and storm-bound of the eight Channel Islands, San Nicolas has had the fewest visitors and thus has a much smaller body of lore than the others. There are no tales such as those of Santa Catalina's freebooters and smugglers, the romantic ranchos of Santa Rosa and Santa Cruz, or the ghosts, ancient and modern, of San Miguel.

San Nicolas, covering about 20,000 acres, less than half the area of Catalina, supported in late prehistoric times up to 1500 Chumash Indians, allied to the other Canaliño of the Santa Barbara Channel, with whom they had communication and trade. Mr. Bryan's work there since 1926 has yielded abundant proof of their ability to exploit their environment, to live off fish, shellfish, and small mammals, to use animal hides and sea grasses for clothing, to use stone and shell utensils in lieu of pottery, cobbles and driftwood for shelter, and even the large bones of stranded whales for houses. They made fishhooks from abalone shell, they used asphaltum to stop holes in abalone shells and to ornament artifacts of stone and bone with tiny carved beads of shell. Unique to a few sites along the channel, including San Nicolas, are small bird, animal and fish effigies carved from Catalina steatite. These are lively and accurate and sometimes abstract, and are thought to be a late manifestation.

There remains a barren outpost subject to violent weather, difficult of access, tenanted by the United States Navy as a tracking and missile station. Subject to depredations of Aleut hunters and explorers in the 18th century, the Indians were removed by missionaries in the 1830s; the island's physical deterioration has since been hastened by erosion stemming from sheep over-grazing and from ground disturbances by visitors seeking artifacts.

Mr. Bryan performs a service to an increasingly archaeology-oriented public by

describing the island, its artifactual remains and its obvious deterioration over the years between his first visit, from October to December 1926 for the Los Angeles Museum to his work there between 1958 and 1960 for the Southwest Museum. The reader may make his own comparison of the differing methods of investigation followed on the two expeditions, the result of the change in the aims and techniques of archaeology.

With many illustrations from both Mr. Bryan's visits, with a foreword by Carl S. Dentzel and an introduction by Clement W. Meighan, UCLA anthropologist, this volume allows the reader to enjoy a vicarious visit to San Nicolas without suffering the buffering of wind, waves and stinging sand.



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By Sr. Dn. Pedro Alonso O'Crouley

TRANSLATED AND EDITED BY SEÁN GALVIN

Translated from the Spanish manuscript, this remarkable text is in print for the first time. It introduces the reader to the many curious and interesting aspects of 18th century New Spain, the Mexico of colonial times. The author, Pedro Alonso O'Crouley, was born in Spain in 1740, his parents having come from Ireland. Making his first trip to New Spain at 24, he was intrigued by the life which surrounded him, and thus filled his book with the colour and people of the new land.

A Description of the Kingdom of New Spain contains 172 pages of text, 12 full-page colour plates of Indians and the different races, 22 black and white plates, 7 pages of fruits and flowers, and a full-size contemporary map (1768) in full colour by Don Joseph Antonio de Alzate y Ramirez. Designed and printed by Lawton and Alfred Kennedy, this fascinating text is priced at only \$10.00 and is available from John Howell—Books, 434 Post Street, San Francisco 94102.

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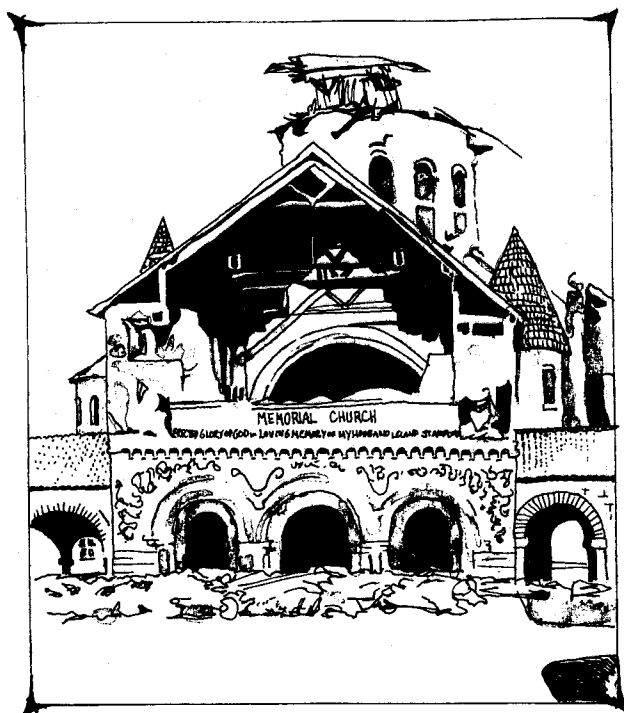
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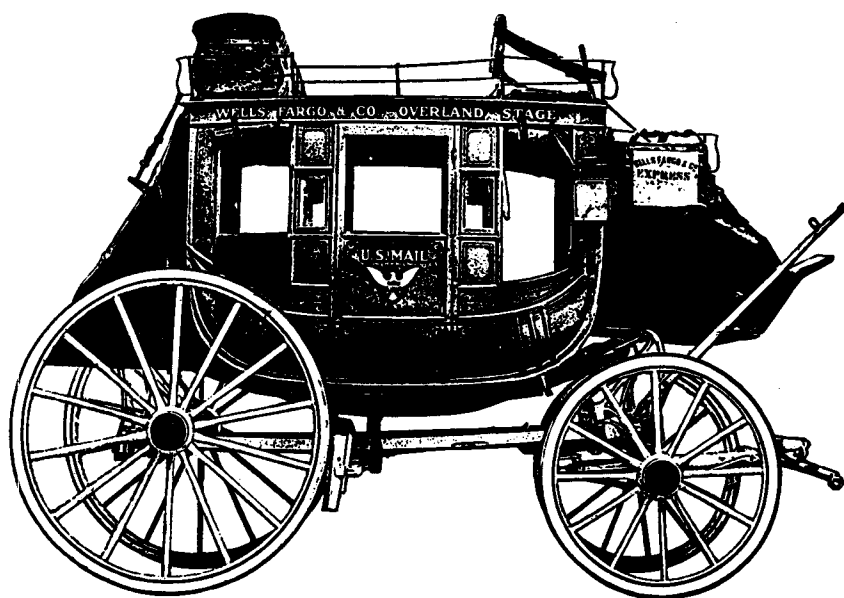
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